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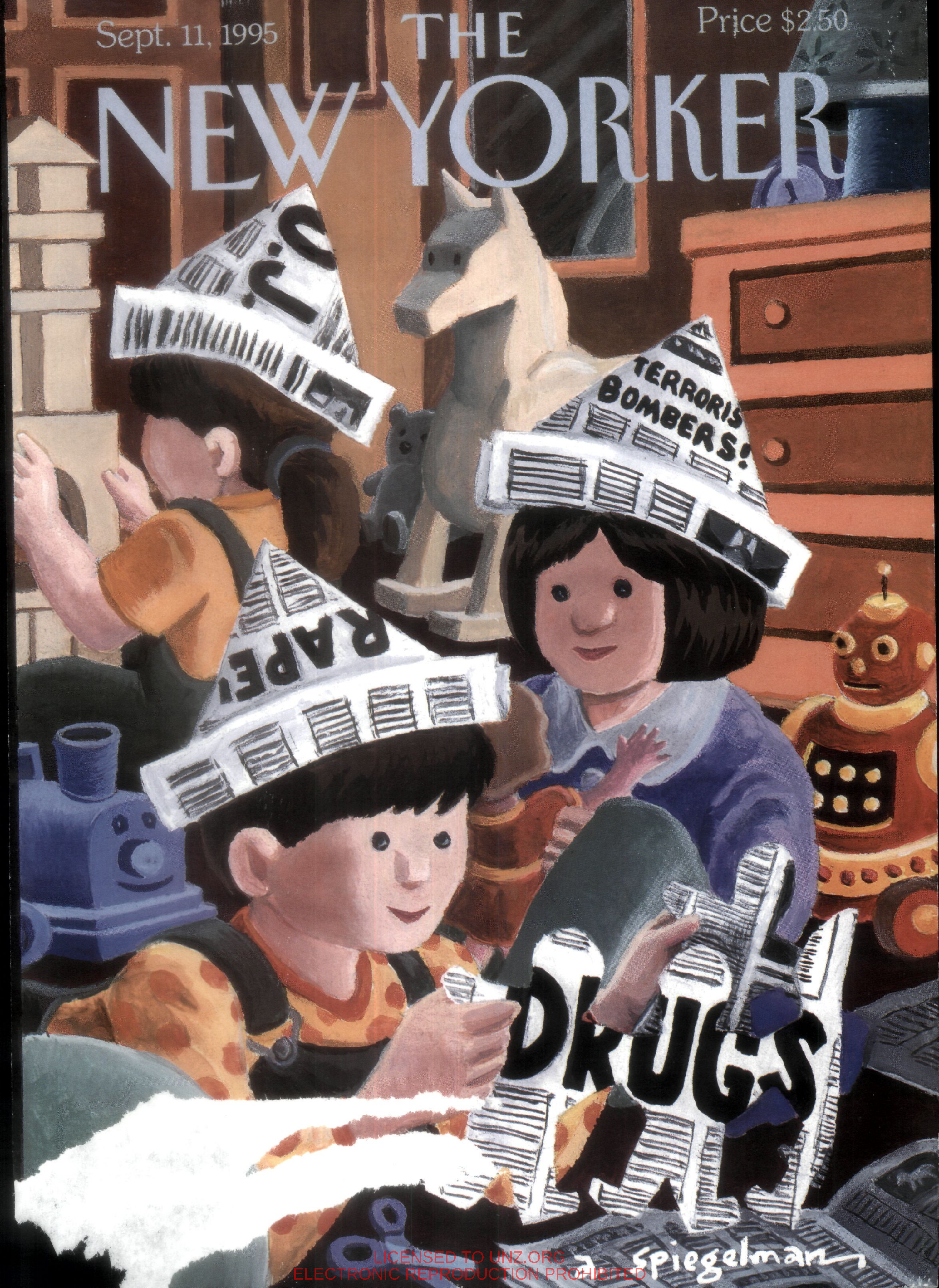
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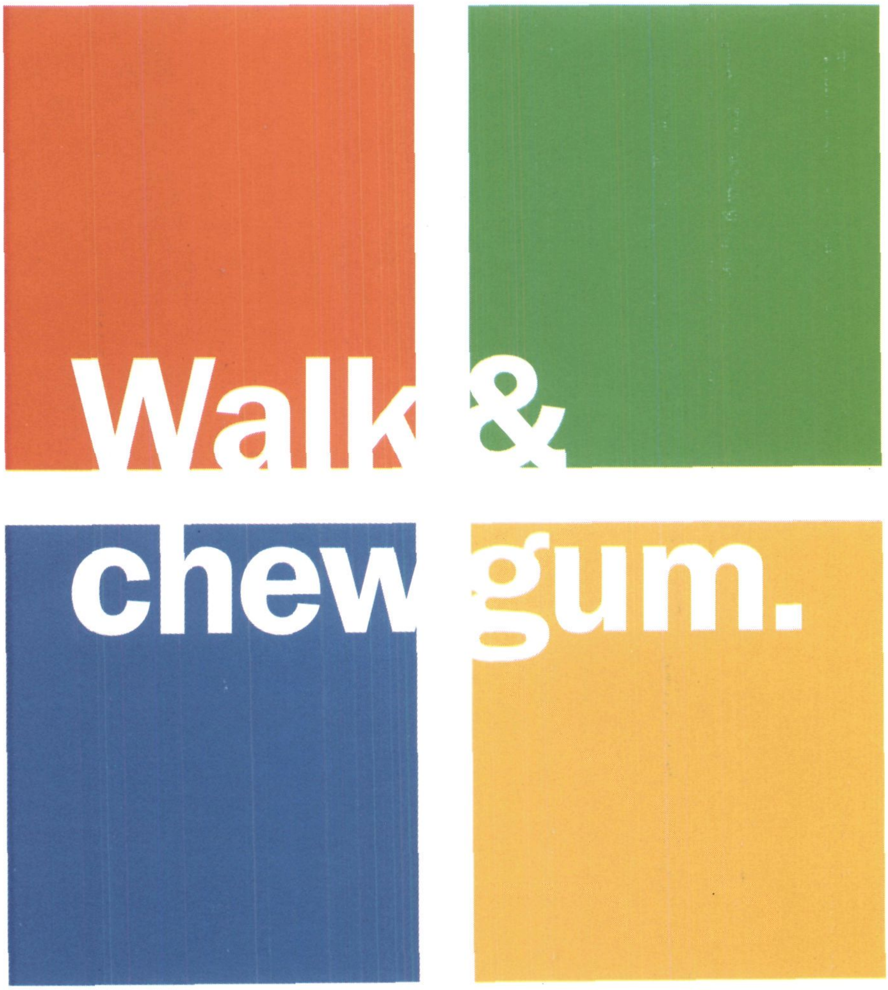

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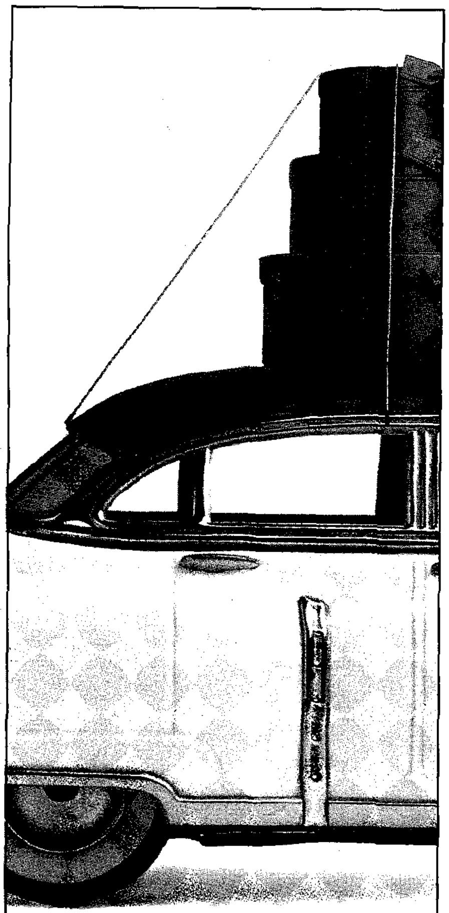

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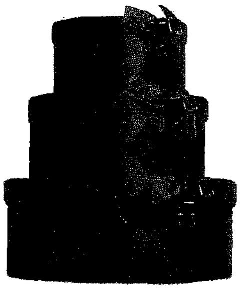

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THE NEW YORKER

SEPTEMBER 11, 1995

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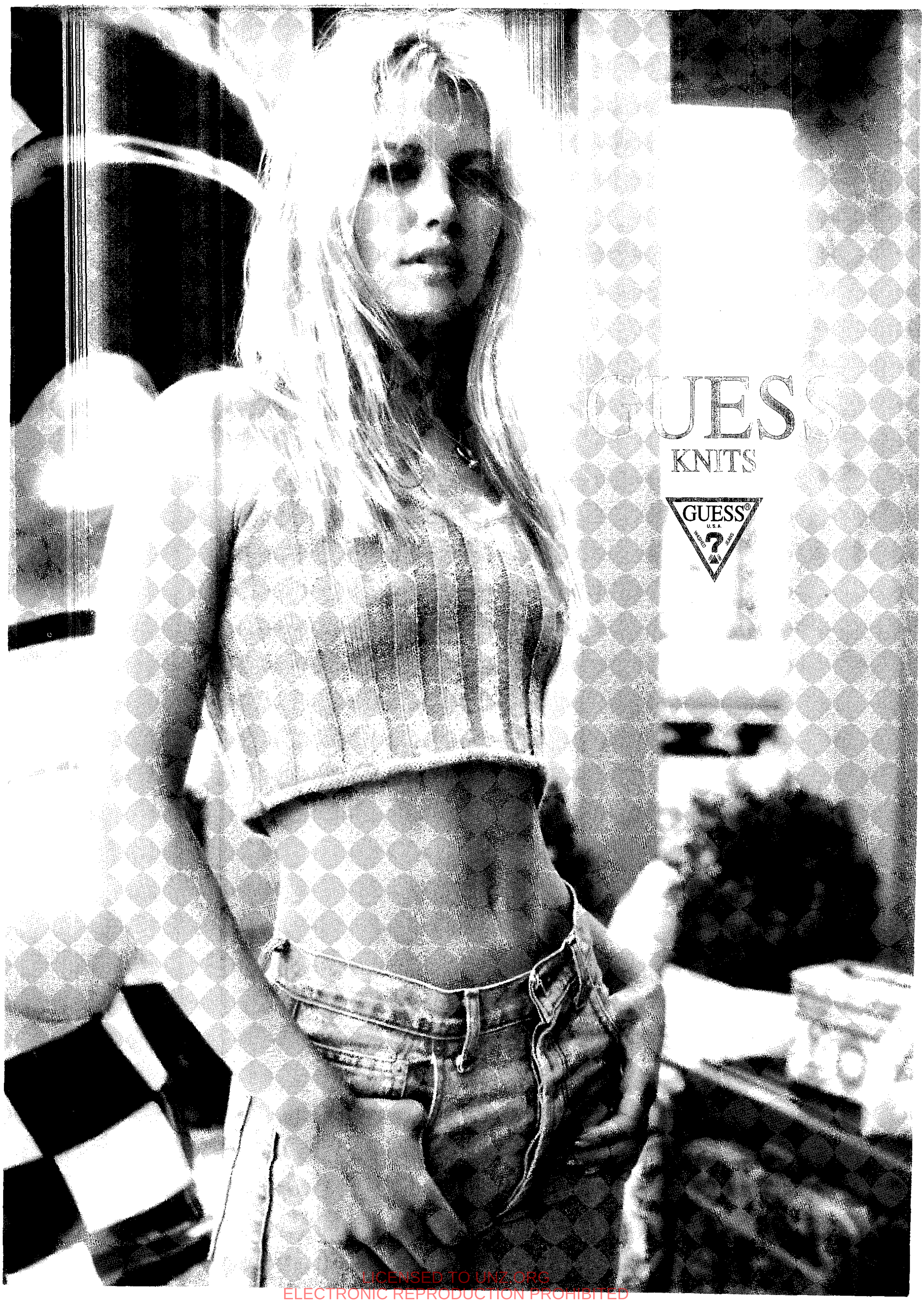
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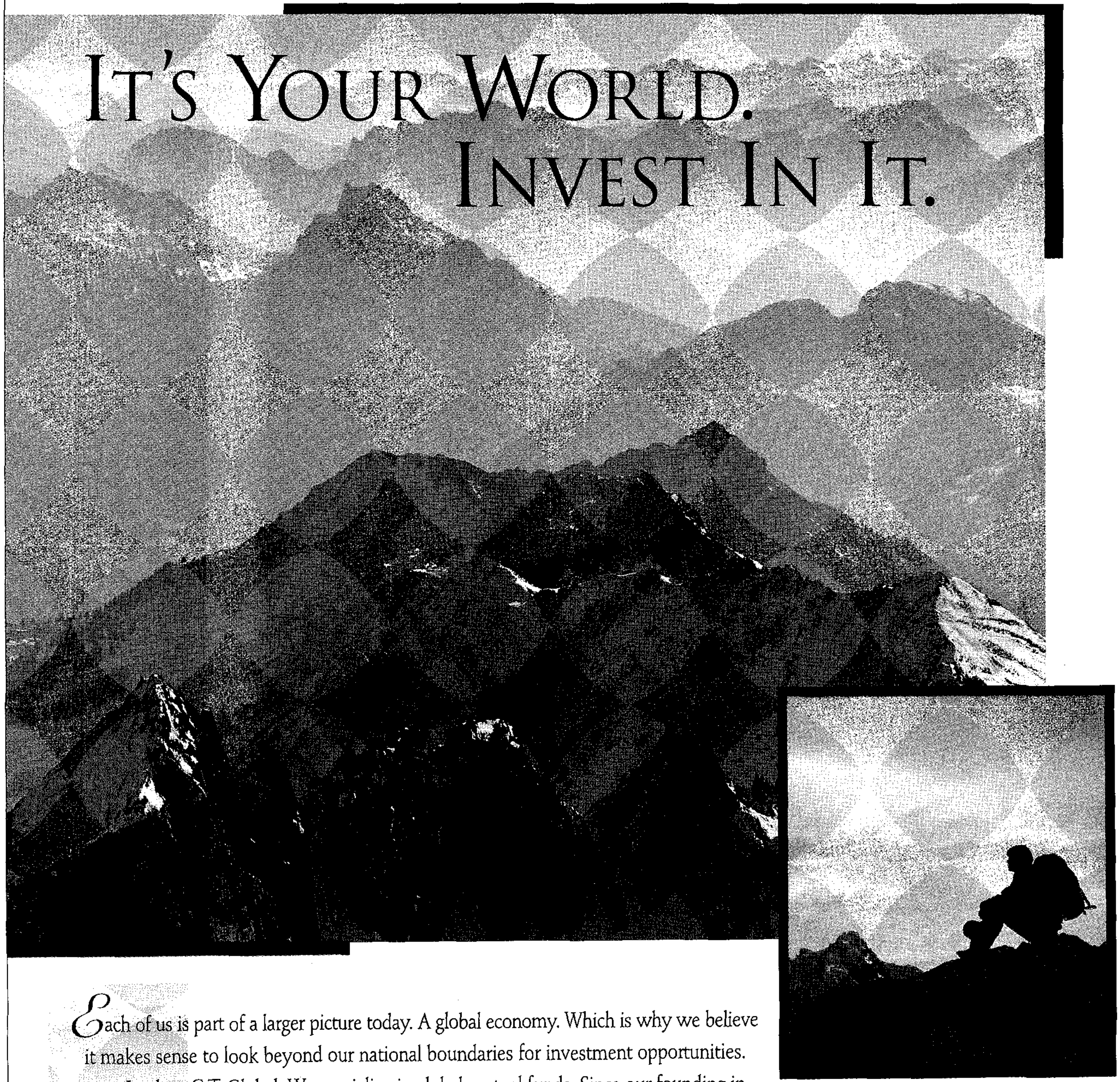

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COMMENT

DISSED

Back to school—and don't forget your hard hat.

LouAnne Johnson, the inspirational inner-city schoolteacher and ex-marine portrayed in the current film "Dangerous Minds," used to tell her students, "I have only one rule in this classroom and that rule is not negotiable: respect yourself and everyone else in this room." It's a detail the movie gets right: respect is a current vogue word in primary and secondary education—this year's fourth "r." (The fourth "r," usually exhortative, is an ever shifting schoolhouse perennial; in years past, "relevance," "rights," and "radon" have all had their turn.) As a moral elixir, though, "respect" can be toxic as well as tonic. In the movie, one student disses another, and a bloody brawl ensues. "We had to do it or we couldn't walk around with our heads up no more," the disrespected boy explains to Johnson (played by Michelle Pfeiffer). "You're a marine. You understand." But this isn't the code of the marines. It's the code of the streets, to which, as the sociologist Elijah Anderson has noted, "respect—loosely defined as being treated 'right' "—is central.

"This outlook reflects the circumscribed opportunities of the inner-city poor," Anderson wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly* last year. "Generally people outside the ghetto have other ways of gaining status and regard." As teachers in New York City return to their classrooms this week, many will have to write "R-E-S-P-E-C-T," if they write it at all, on broken blackboards, with stubs of leftover chalk, in dilapidated and overcrowded classrooms. The city has chopped more than a billion dollars from the school budget just since last summer, and further huge cuts are as much a certainty as rising enrollments. In the schools no less than in the street, the demand for "respect" is an index of despair. For teachers and students in private schools (and a lot of suburban public schools), that demand would be redundant: respect already surrounds them, in the palpable form of better facilities, smaller classes, and a budget process that permits an orderly opening of school.

By contrast, in New York's public schools, as in many other urban school systems, the sense of futility verges on numbness. In one district in upper Manhattan, an emergency meeting on

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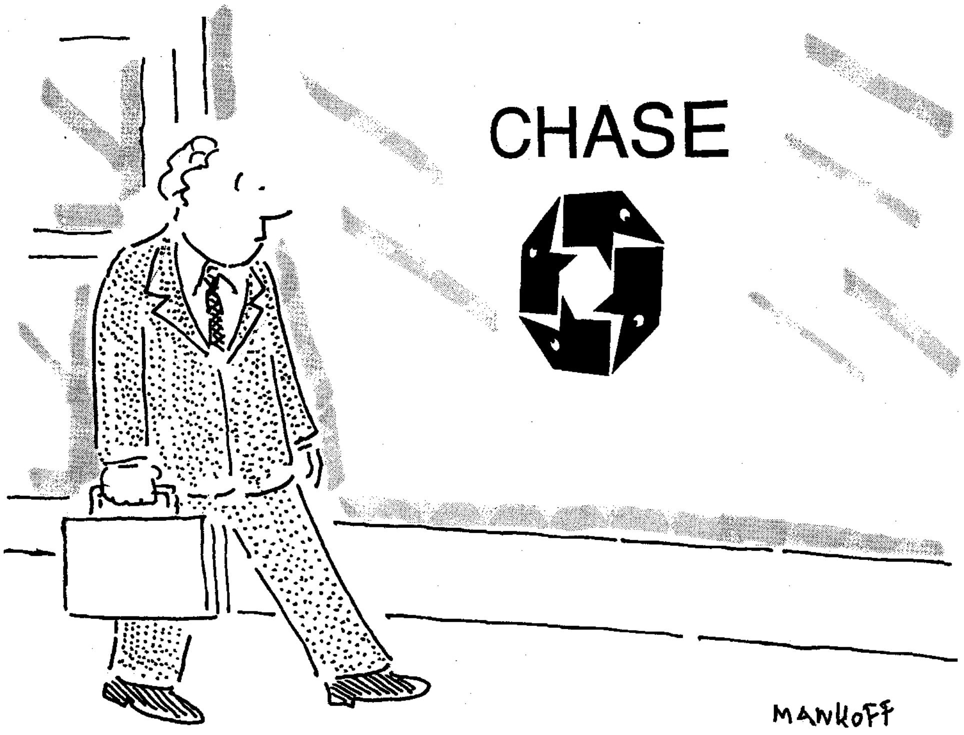
impending cuts, theoretically open to all fifty thousand or so of the district's parents, attracted fewer than ten people. Mayor Giuliani, facing a budget crisis, has rightly insisted on cutting bureaucratic waste, and has suggested that slashing fat from the central Board of Education and the offices of the city's thirty-two community school districts frees resources for the actual teaching of children. To date, however, not a penny of the billion-plus dollars saved has found its way to the classroom. The schools are worse off, not better off, than they were a year ago. And, even if the city were now to get rid of every bureaucrat on the school system's payroll, it would still come up many tens of millions of dollars short. Two weeks ago, the State Education Department firmly forbade the city to reduce the hours of class instruction. Consequently, with the opening of school a weekend away, principals and community-school-district superintendents were scrambling for other ways to save money. Many still had no idea how many teachers they would be allowed to keep or how large classes would have to be. In some districts, class sizes may grow to thirty-five or more. Such frills as after-school programs, art and music classes, and school nurses have long since been all but eliminated.

Giuliani, along with many conservative theorists, maintains that a school system as vast and as complicated as New York's should be run not by an educator but by a business leader—someone who has an eye for the bottom line. Last year, just such a business leader, Harold O. Levy, an executive of Salomon Brothers, chaired an independent panel of prominent New Yorkers from the city's financial, legal, and real-estate communities in an investigation of the schools' physical plant. He and his fellow-investigators analyzed how state and city money is spent on repair and renovation, examined how school buildings are managed, and visited dozens of schools. They found falling masonry, leaky roofs, crumbling beams, loose and broken windowpanes. In their report, released in June, the panel members expressed shock at the dilapidation. (They shouldn't have been surprised; such conditions have been described in newspapers, magazines, studies, and surveys a thousand heartbreaking times.) Moreover, they concluded that lack of money—not mismanagement of funds—was the root cause of the dreadful conditions they found. What differentiated these business people from the ones Giuliani and other conservatives like to extoll is that they've actually gone inside the schools and looked at them. The panel ended up advocating a big property-tax increase to finance a major rebuilding effort. "Unless immediate and far-reaching steps are taken to fix the buildings," the report concluded, "we believe that it is probable that schoolchildren, teachers, and staff will be hurt or even killed in the near future."

Sticks and stones may break kids' bones, but decrepit schools will kill them. The problem is not New York's alone, nor is it limited to urban areas: public-school buildings are deteriorating across the country. And, though it is claimed that Americans are fleeing the public schools en masse, more than eighty per cent of America's children still attend them, and their enrollment is rising by a million students a year. One teacher recently reported that when chunks of plaster fall on her fourth graders she reads them "Chicken Little." Maybe she's teaching them the wrong lesson, though; the sky (or, at least, the ceiling) *is* falling. Maybe America, despite all the prating about family values, hates its children. What else can explain the cruel abandonment of so many kids to such wretched circumstances? A recent analysis, one of the most comprehensive of its kind, by the Luxembourg Income Study found that America's poor children are much poorer than children living in most of the other Western industrialized nations. For a generation, child poverty in the United States has been increasing, along with the gap between rich and poor—a gap that is wider here than in any of the seventeen other countries surveyed. Had the Luxembourg researchers counted in-kind benefits, such as day care and health care, America would have rated even poorer.

It's not as if we didn't know the answers to our educational problems. We just choose to ignore them. In "Dangerous Minds" the filmmakers attribute LouAnne Johnson's success to her individual heroism. But in her book "My Posse Don't Do Homework," on which the movie is based, Johnson credits a more mundane factor: a government spending program, of all unfashionable things. Her school, she says, was "funded by a U.S. Government grant that pays for reduced class sizes . . . and resource periods for teachers to provide personal instruction and counseling." It is this genuine respect for children—expressed by actions, not just words—that accounts, in Johnson's eyes, for the program's success. "When classes are small enough to allow individual student-teacher interaction," she writes, "a minor miracle occurs: Teachers teach and students learn."

—Sara Mosle



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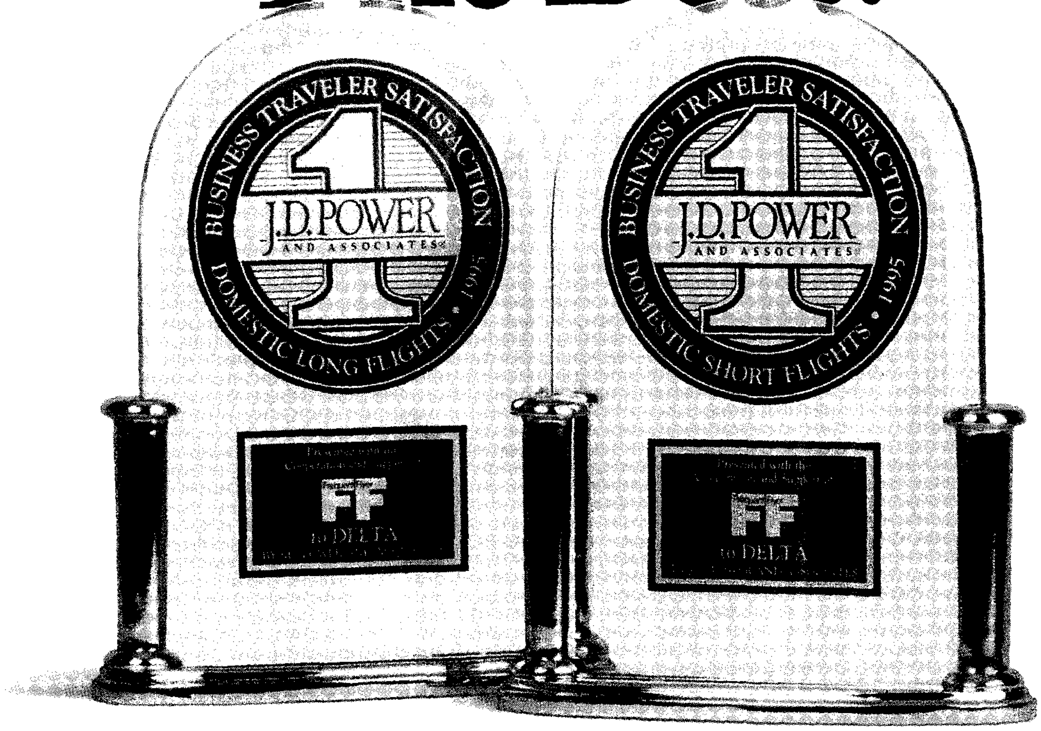
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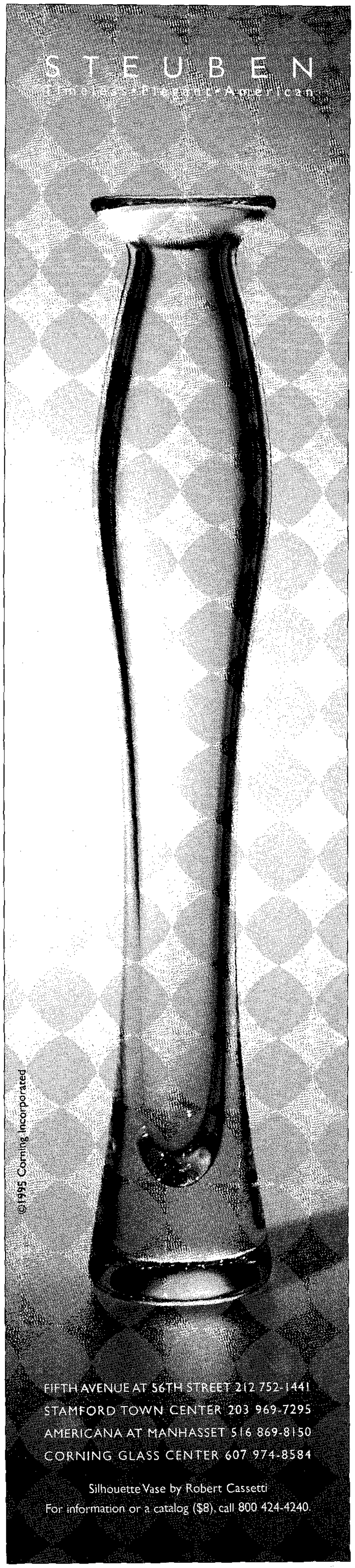

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IN THE MAIL

ROSEANNE

I never watch "Roseanne," so why should I read "Dealing with Roseanne" (by John Lahr, photographs by Annie Leibovitz, July 17th)? Its subject, after all, is a woman who could have invented the tabloids for her own recreation. I was drawn in, however, by the subtle way Leibovitz was able to show Roseanne in a setting where the woman, for all her ranting and chanting in the public eye, really exists in her own lonely universe. In addition, Lahr's analysis provided insight into an artist who chooses her own direction. Lahr and Leibovitz have made the person behind the persona accessible and sympathetic.

Regina Morin
San Diego, Calif.

Reading John Lahr's article on Roseanne motivated me to watch the show. Theretofore, I had reached for the remote when her face came on the screen. Hereafter, I will continue to do so. I agree with Roseanne that hypocrisy is the staple of our daily lives—that it infuses our economics, law, government, and even our religion. And maybe the efforts of Roseanne and many others like her, who insist on illuminating hypocrisy when they see it, will give us all a chance to break through and lead more honest lives. I do not, however, agree that the aggressive form of humor Roseanne uses to convey her message is the best approach. She wants women to act like the very hierarchy she says has put us in the ditch. Saying "fuck," being obscenely fat, and belittling, taunting, and sneering at everyone around her do not a strong woman make, even when laboriously gussied up with humor.

Yvonne Morris
Center Harbor, N.H.

I've been reading *The New Yorker* since the thirties and have successfully made the transition to the new editorship. I like the new look. But giving Roseanne nineteen pages to revel in her outrageousness demands comment: Go to your room, Roseanne, and play with your little monster friends. Why does *The New Yorker* assume that we find Roseanne "very, very funny"? The table of contents has it right: she is "loud, vulgar, difficult"—and I'd add tasteless, crass, and boring.

Bernice L. Kaufman
New Bedford, Ma.

The fact that Roseanne's eight years of unprecedented success have been journalistically marked only by articles about her weight, tattoos, plastic surgery, and all-around weird living goes a long way toward proving some of the major points she's been making all along: women are never judged the same way as men are; the standards for men and women are far from equal; and all female success stories are defined first by the woman's appearance. Why is Roseanne the obese tyrant, Madonna the talentless ho, and Oprah the yo-yo diet queen when they are really all shrewd businesswomen? I was quite pleased to hear about the Roseanne who, week after week, puts out one of the best shows on TV.

Karen M. Baker
Providence, R.I.

Mr. Lahr's examination of Roseanne the artist proves, above all, that a refreshing brand of feminism is alive and well in late-twentieth-century America. Feminist scholars and other half-witted intellectuals debate the plight of American women, but Roseanne, through an intelligent television sitcom, reveals the state of women (particularly working-class women) in America more honestly and effectively than any tenured feminist who is planning yet another inaccessible study that will only gather dust on the shelves. In the unpretentious language of the domestic goddess, "Roseanne" is a great fuckin' show, and its political visionary is a great fuckin' artist.

JOYCE BARRY
Radford, Va.

TREASURE TROVE

One look at your July 17th cover, "The Treasure," by Peter de Sève, sent me into fits of glee. Finding all the treasures in the picture of the couple at the flea market was as much fun as doing a puzzle. Congratulations to Mr. de Sève.

AL ARGENTIERI
Paterson, N.J.

RIGHT AS RAND

If you think about it, Homer could have been a fat, womanizing drunk whose imagination and storytelling skills were superior to his frail humanity. As for Ayn Rand (A Critic at Large, by Claudia Roth Pierpont, July 24th), the woman who mythologized her imaginary gods and goddesses of the capitalistic spirit and who was idealized by her captivated public, yes, she turned out to be less than the sum of her ideas. But her public should never have assigned her aging flesh to the realm of Mt. Olympus where John Galt and Howard Roark defined perfection, among a congregation of youthful, beautiful, and highly ambitious capitalists unburdened by earthly concerns. And to those of you who don't like her ideas and pooh-pooh her romanticism, those of us who still dog-ear and reread her books say, "Who cares?"

LEIGH ANNE DEAR
Houston, Texas

What a pleasure to read nine thousand words about Ayn Rand without having to struggle through any explanation of her accomplishments in epistemology (she defined a radically new theory of concepts), ethics (she conceived a new moral code of rational selfishness, and also a new theory of volition), or politics (she provided a moral base for capitalism). You've got us readers pegged just right: we feel small in the presence of intellectual giants, so we need to see some personal weaknesses, some flaws, to remind us that even giants put their pants on one leg at a time. How about a Profile of Albert Einstein with no mention of relativity?

THOMAS A. BOWDEN
Severna Park, Md.

Ms. Pierpont's essay on Ayn Rand was quite fair and, in its fairness, rather courageous. Even today, after nearly everything Rand said about the Soviet Union has been proved true, she is despised by most intellectuals. This is because she also thought that, comparatively, America is the most humane of all countries. Rand's failings are not monumental. They're a bit embarrassing for her, because she sold herself as a paragon of virtue, but this doesn't make her opinions about many major philosophical issues wrong. In a stifling atmosphere of obfuscation, Rand was a breath of fresh air to many of us in the halls of ivy.

TIBOR R. MACHAN
Auburn, Ala.

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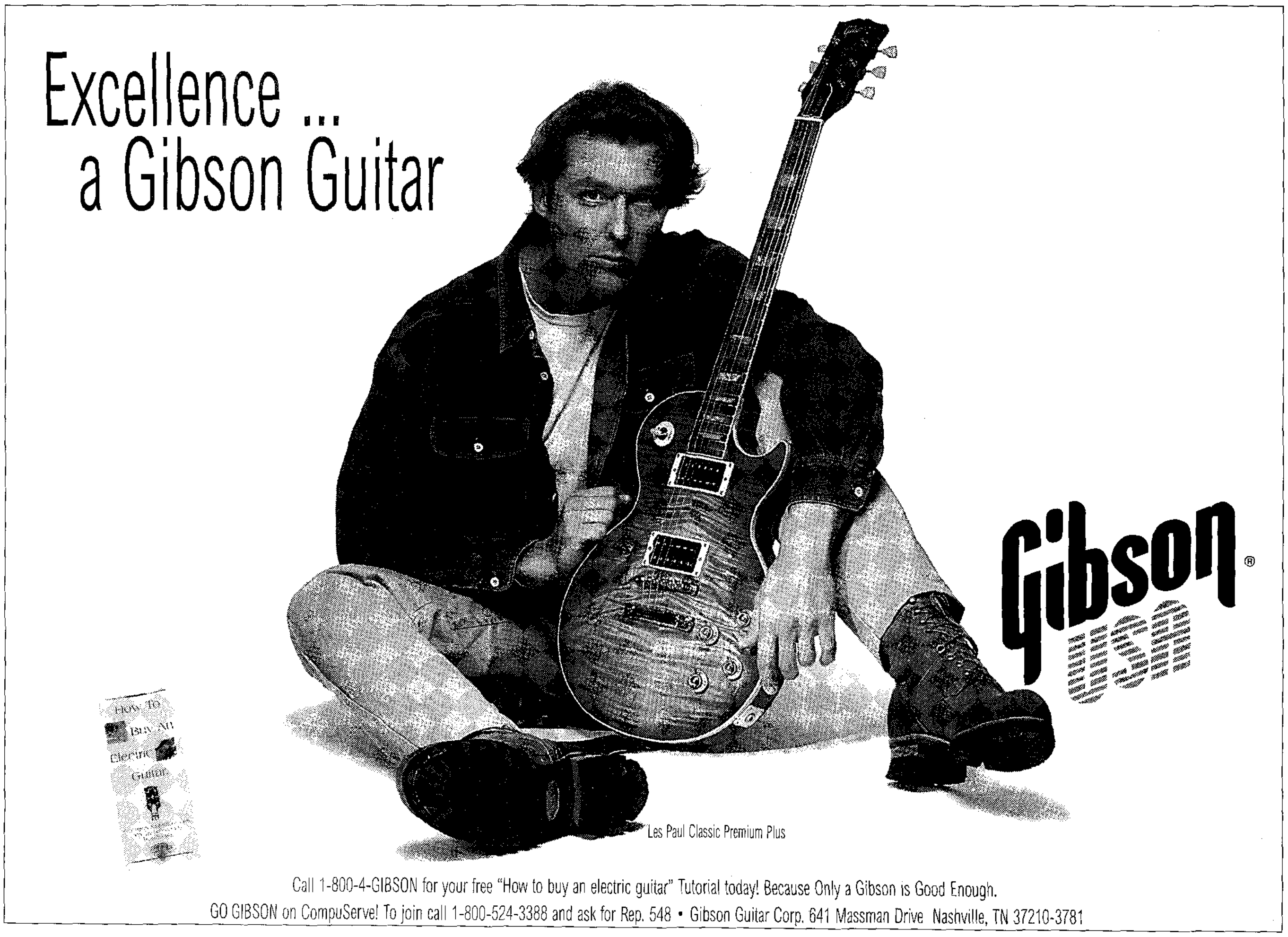
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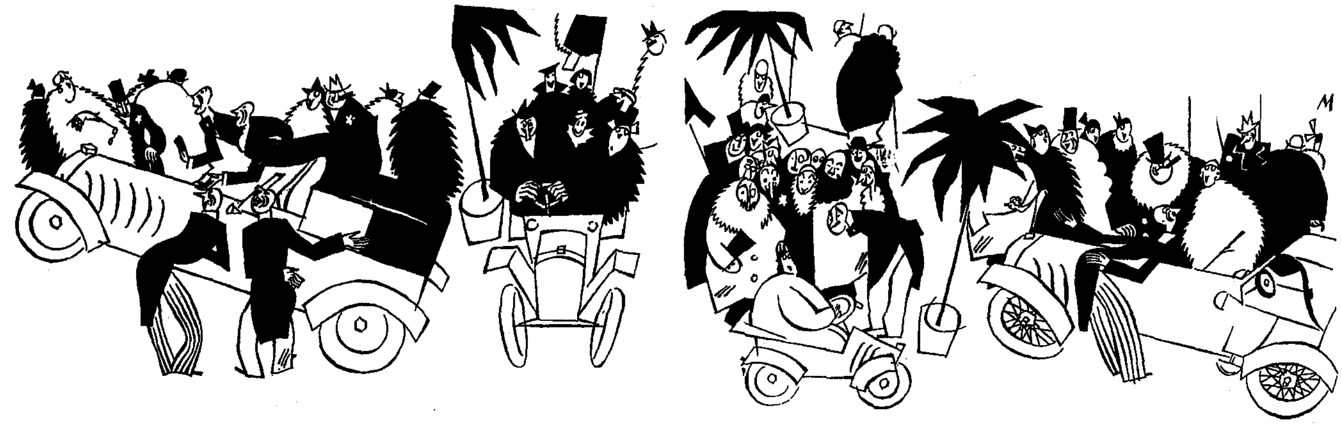

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Broadway on Broadway—A free outdoor concert of numbers from both current and upcoming Broadway musicals. With Matthew Broderick, Jon Secada, Patti Lupone, Valerie Harper, Rob Becker, Carol Channing, Mary Alice, and Liz Callaway. Walter Cronkite narrates. (Broadway between 43rd and 44th Sts. Sept. 10 at 1. A "pre-show" starts at 12:30.)

Company—The Roundabout Theatre Company opens its thirtieth-anniversary season with a revival of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's 1970 musical about marriage. The cast includes Boyd Gaines, Debra Monk, Charlotte d'Amboise, and Kate Burton. Directed by Scott Ellis and choreographed by Rob Marshall. In previews. (Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

A Doll's House—Ibsen's classic, in a Pearl Theatre Company production, directed by Grey Johnson. In previews. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

Floating Rhoda and the Glue Man—Dylan McDermott and Myriam Cyr have the lead roles in Eve Ensler's new comedy, about the sexual adventures of young couples. Directed by Ariel Orr Jordan. In previews. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202.)

House of Bugs: A Biological Tragedy—Richard Foreman's Ontological Theatre presents a multimedia play by Kevin Cunningham concerning the rationalizations of a heroin addict involved in a destructive sexual relationship. Opens Sept. 7 at 8 and runs through Sept. 24. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650.)

Incognito Sex—Linda Hill examines the tangled path of her sex life in a new solo work. Opens Sept. 11 at 7:30 and continues, on Mondays only, through Sept. 25. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

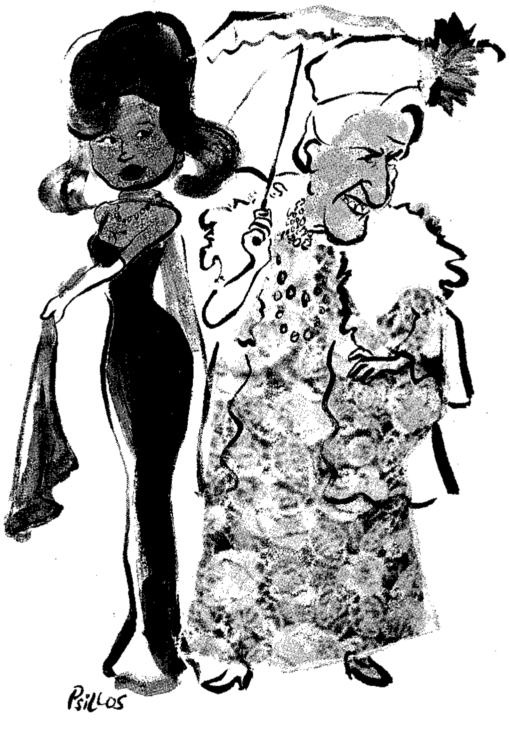
The Island of Lost Shoes—The gay British troupe known as Bloolips—Bette Bourne, Lavinia Co-op, Naughty Knickers, Bella, and Harmony—brings its new show to town. Sept. 7-9 at 7:30 and Sept. 10 at 3. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Through Sept. 24.)

Language of One—The New York Deaf Theatre presents a love story by Drew Emery and Lewis Merkin about a deaf gay architect. The production employs the technique known as shadowing, in which each character is played by two actors, one signing, the other speaking. Opens Sept. 6 at 8 and runs through Sept. 24. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 683-9772, voice/use relay.)

Mister Lincoln—Herbert Mitgang's monodrama runs through Oct. 1. With William Walsh as Honest Abe. Directed by Kurt Wagemann. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 581-4125.)

The Secret Annex—A new musical about Anne Frank and her family. With Patricia Ann Gardner as Anne, and Don Frame as her father, Otto, from whose point of view the story is told. Book by Robert Carr; music by William Baton. Dom Ruggiero directs. Previews Sept. 8-10. Opens Sept. 12 at 8. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Sin—Kelly Coffield plays an aerial traffic reporter in this comedy by Wendy MacLeod. Tom Aulino, Steve Carell, John Elsen, Jeffrey Hutchinson, Camryn Manheim, Julio Monge, and John Slattery round out the cast. Directed by David Petrarca. Previews begin Sept. 12. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)



Pia Zadora and Ann B. Davis, who have joined the cast of "Crazy for You."

DEMETRIOS PSILLOS

Takigi-Noh '95—An outdoor performance of a comedy, "Futari Daimyo," and a tragedy, "Funa-Benkei," by Japan's Umewaka Rokuro & Company. Presented by the Public Theatre and the Japan-U.S. Partnership for the Performing Arts. Sept. 8-10 at 8. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Third New Immigrant Play Festival—Vietnamese playwright Le Thi Diem Thuy's "Red Fiery Summer" is the first offering in this showcase for new works. Sept. 8-10 at 8. The festival continues through Oct. 8. (26th Street Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-9772.)

Tons of Money—Alan Ayckbourn's adaptation of Will Evans and Valentine's 1922 farce on the theme of greed. Opens Sept. 7 at 8 and runs through Sept. 24. (Synchronicity Space, 55 Mercer St. 713-5334.)

Too Jewish?—Avi Hoffman sets about reviving Yiddish in this mixture of songs and stories, which reopens at a new theatre on Sept. 7 at 8. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Wallenberg Mission—A Love Creek production of Nicholas Wenckheim's play about the Swedish diplomat and businessman Raoul Wallenberg, who rescued thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Second World War. Opens Sept. 6 at 8 and continues through Sept. 24. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 769-7973.)

OPENED RECENTLY

After-Play—Anne Meara's comedy, about two couples who get together for an after-theatre dinner, stars Ms. Meara, Barbara Barrie, Larry Keith, and Merwin Goldsmith. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/13/95.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

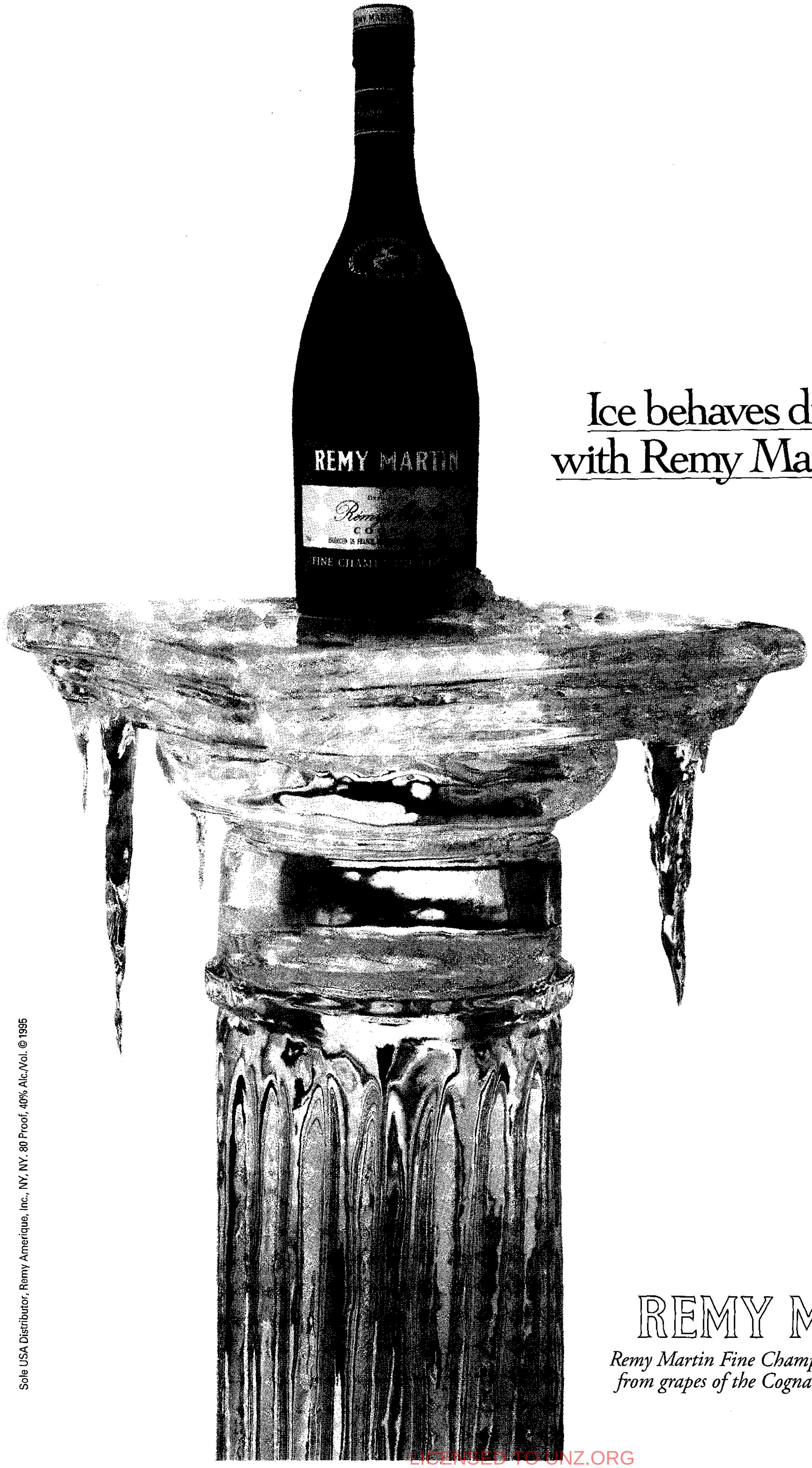
Cute Boys in Their Underpants—A return engagement of Robert Coles's comedy, set during rehearsals for a junky gay play of the same title. (Sanford Meisner, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. 206-1764. Closes Sept. 17.)

Death Defying Acts—Three subpar one-act comedies, by David Mamet, Elaine May, and Woody Allen. (3/20/95) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

A Dream Play—Paul Todaro directs the Independent Theatre Company's staging of Strindberg's 1901 fantasy. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

Ecstasy—Mike Leigh's play takes place in a dismal North London flat in the winter of 1979. The late-seventies costumes and set are depressingly perfect, and the actors bring the six working-class characters to life with great specificity and vitality. (Smokeophobes take note: the theatre is small, and there's a whole lotta smokin' goin' on.) (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Food Chain—A new comedy by Nicky Silver. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)



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Georgia-Pacific

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf—Ntozake Shange directed this twentieth-anniversary production of her consciousness-raising play about black womanhood in America. It's still so fresh that after two decades it seems like it was written yesterday. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510. Closes Sept. 24.)

Having Our Say—Sadie and Bessie Delany, two sisters who have passed the hundred-year mark, presented their vivid life stories in a 1993 best-seller; the book has been adapted beautifully from the page to the stage by Emily Mann, who also directed. Gloria Foster and Mary Alice are brilliant as the sisters, who were taught by their family to "reach high" despite the dogging of Jim Crow. (4/24/95) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Heiress—A revival of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's 1947 adaptation of Henry James's "Washington Square," directed by Gerald Gutierrez. Cherry Jones, who plays the title character, is exquisitely—almost unbearably—vulnerable. And the wonderful Frances Sternhagen is touching and funny as a widowed aunt. (3/20/95) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—In this revival of Frank Loesser's 1961 musical, Matthew Broderick has polish and timing, but it's Lillias White's gospel solo in "Brotherhood of Man" that lifts the audience into a zone of joy. (4/24/95) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Indiscretions—This production of Jean Cocteau's "Les Parents Terribles," a dark comedy about the perversities of desire in family life, is marred by heavy-handedness and an unsatisfying central performance: Kathleen Turner, playing a hysterically possessive mother, is an unfocussed sprawl with a distractingly unplaceable accent. Roger Rees, Cynthia Nixon, and Jude Law also star, under the direction of Sean Mathias. (5/15/95) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

John & Jen—Andrew Lippa and Tom Greenwald's musical, which explores problems of love and family, is often hackneyed and repetitive, but it's well staged by Gabriel Barre. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—Gorilla Repertory Theatre's annual free outdoor production in Washington Square Park, directed by Christopher Carter Sanderson, runs through Sept. 24. (For more information, call 330-8086.)

The Only Thing Worse You Could Have Told Me . . .—Greg Louganis has taken over for Dan Butler in Mr. Butler's one-man show, a procession of characters from the real world of contemporary gay culture. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 307-4100.)

Party—In David Dillon's comedy, seven gay men get together to play a strip version of truth or dare, with hilarious (if occasionally didactic) results. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Pets!—Helen Butleroff, together with seventeen writers, composers, and lyricists and five engaging actors, has created the perfect theatrical beach novel, about people and their pets. The evening has its slow bits, but its charm and silliness consistently win out. How can you lose with a show in which a lovelorn iguana sings a tango? (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 307-4100.)

Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman—A hundred-minute standup routine. A lot of vigorous nodding goes on in the theatre—never by men and women at the same time. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—A feast of early rock and roll, performed by a cast with Grade A lungs and legs. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Swingtime Canteen—A re-creation of a 1944 U.S.O. concert, performed in a night club. Extraneous bits of plot threaten to derail the show, but the lovely songs, done with verve and charm, carry the day. Charles Busch recently donned drag again to join the cast. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Sylvia—In A. R. Gurney's new comedy, Sarah Jessica Parker, as a dog named Sylvia, brings meaning to the life of a middle-aged currency trader (John Cunningham) while driving a canine-shaped wedge between him and his wife (Mariette Hartley). Parker has some funny moments, but this upper-middle-class fairy tale settles too soon into a monotonous sweetness; it lacks bite. John Tillinger directed. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind—The Neo-Futurists, a troupe from Chicago, perform thirty original two-minute plays in one hour. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 330-8087. Thursdays through Saturdays at 11 P.M.)

Travels with My Aunt—Giles Havergal, directing his own witty adaptation of Graham Greene's novel, has captured the book's amusingly puzzled tone with his playful, inventive (though overlong) staging. Four wildly different actors all play Henry Pulling, the staid retired banker whose eccentric Aunt Augusta drags him into her international adventures; one doubles as Aunt Augusta, and the other three skillfully handle some twenty additional parts. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000.)

2 Boys in a Bed on a Cold Winter's Night—James Edwin Parker's comic tale is about how not to behave during a one-night stand, but it's also a sharp-eyed exploration of emotional intimacy. Robert Gomes and Michael Curry make the grown-up boys sympathetic without being mushy. Directed by Thomas Caruso. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 279-4200.)

Waiting for Godot—Beckett's play, presented by the Jean Cocteau Repertory, under the direction of Eve Adamson. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

What You Said—The improv company Chicago City Limits presents a brand-new revue, featuring its ever-popular five-minute musical. (Chicago City Limits Theatre, First Ave. at 61st St. 888-5233.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP / TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION!:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 17. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **SHOW BOAT:** Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **SUNSET BOULEVARD:** Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.

DANCE

Jimmy Slyde—The sixty-seven-year-old Godfather of Tap continues his monthly gig at an out-of-the-way bar with a distinct Left Bank feel. His technique is still sharp, his body loose, and his taps fresh and crisp (except when he's doing some of his smooth trademark slipping and sliding). After a few numbers, he calls dancers up from the audience for a tap jam session; volunteers range from unpolished young talents to masters like Buster Brown and Savion Glover, when they're in town. The excellent accom-

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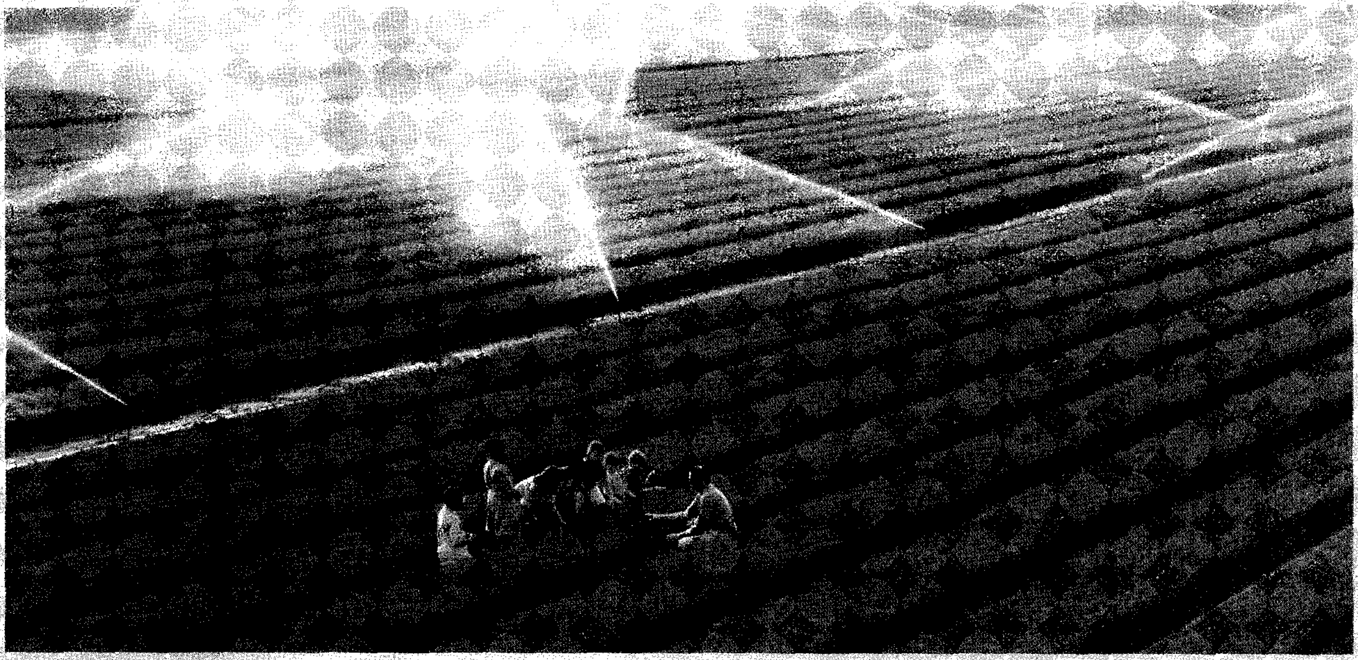
forests

Georgia-Pacific



panying trio features the soulful Bob Cunningham on bass. (La Place on the Park, 308 W. 58th St., at Columbus Circle. For reservations, call 664-1308. Sept. 7 at 9:30 and 11:30.)

Chris Aiken—The dancer, a leader in contact improvisation, sets "open-ended choreographic structures" for both dancers and musicians, in works that include "Blues Suite: Underneath It All" and "Where Have I Known You Before." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Sept. 7-9 at 8.)

David Hurwith—The choreographer continues his experiments in jazz-influenced improvisation, with a duet, "Sharpening Forward"; a solo, "I Tend to Linger"; and a sextet, "Willow Willow," accompanied by twenty boom boxes. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Sept. 7-9 at 9.)

Creach/Koester—Terry Creach and Stephen Koester and their company of male dancers perform "I Witness," inspired by the mythic masculinity of film-noir heroes. In addition, Creach and Koester will each collaborate on a duet, with choreographers Peter Schmitz and Sean Curran, respectively. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 924-0077. Sept. 6-10 at 8.)

"Fall Harvest"—Première performances by the Artichoke Dance Company, which reunites dancers Lynn Neuman, Amy Drum, and Daniel Gwirtzman, who will commemorate their student years in Michigan. The evening includes Neuman's "Unsolid Ground" and "Obscene Gestures for Women"; Drum's "An Evening with Grace and Charm Frick"; and Gwirtzman's solo "Autumn Rhythm." (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. For ticket information, call 274-1147. Sept. 8 at 9 and Sept. 9-10 at 8.)

Pilar Rioja—In her twenty-third New York season, the dancer performs solo in a range of traditional Spanish styles; expect canes, fans, footwork, skirt work, snapping fingers, and castanets. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. Sept. 6-8 and Sept. 12 at 8, Sept. 9 at 3, and Sept. 10 at 7. Through Sept. 17.)

Sarah Skaggs Dance Company—The five-member troupe appears in "Higher Ground," a party-like work that has ended, in previous performances, with the audience joining the dancers onstage. (Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. Sept. 12 at 5:30. No tickets necessary.)

The Bessies—After a year's absence, the Oscars of the downtown performance community are back, and, as with the Oscars, one looks forward to its guaranteed costume debacles, maudlin and overwritten presentations, and substantial public evidence regarding who, at present, is zooming whom. The Bessies, however, differ from the Oscars in one important regard: the performances are worth watching. (An example: the 1989 dance dedicated to Jesse Helms, during which, in an increasingly vigorous series of chaîné turns, the kilted Rob Besserer revealed how little he was wearing beneath his costume.) This year the acts include the New York–Buenos Aires Connection (Irene Hultman's band for "Tango Babe"); "School's Out: The Naming Project," a video and performance piece created by Mary Ellen Strom with teen-agers from the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center; and "Solo for José," a violently beautiful work choreographed by William Douglas for the dancer José Navas. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. For reservations, call 691-6500. Sept. 12 at 7:15.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

R. L. Burnside and Junior Kimbrough—Blues by the water. (World Financial Center, Battery Park City. No tickets necessary. Sept. 6 at 7.)

Better Than Ezra—"Deluxe," the début disk by this New Orleans-based foursome, is packed with plodding power chords and generic sing-along choruses like "Hey-hey-ah!" and "Good, good, so good," which makes the band perfect fodder for the college-football crowd. (Academy, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Sept. 6 at 7:30.)

Pizzicato Five, at Tramps.

HIROSHI TANABE

Jamiroquai—England's love affair with African-American music hasn't waned since the glory days of the Beatles and the Stones. From the same U.K. scene that brought us Soul II Soul and the Brand New Heavies comes Jamiroquai, led by Jay Kay, a twenty-five-year-old white man who sings like Stevie Wonder. On two energetic albums, this self-described "space cowboy" waxes philosophical about the spirit, the environment, and street-level politics, over fluid, upbeat jams. With Jazzmatazz II. (Manhattan Center Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. 714-8001. Sept. 7 at 8:30.)

Sub-Pop-o-Rama—Sub Pop, the Seattle label that gave the world Nirvana and inadvertently popularized the plaid shirt, has a new crop of bands, all of whom transcend geography and type. The audacious Grifters—just-signed underground heroes—make the sound of music falling apart, beautifully: they fold together dense, blasting guitars, rough vocals, jagged lyrics, and deep Memphis roots. Six Finger Satellite, from Providence, channels sheer power through lead singer J. Ryan, who writhes and jerks and plays his strap-on synthesizer in what might be an homage to Edgar Winter *and* Devo. Chicago's Red Red Meat meanders through Stonesy, bluesy jams and the occasional trance-induced state. Add Thornetta Davis, an R. & B. shouter from Detroit; Tucson's Friends of Dean Martinez, whose instrumentals ring with spaghetti-Western lap-steel guitar; and L.A.'s Plexi, and you've got the everything bagel of rock extravaganzas. (Westbeth Theatre, 151 Bank St. 741-0391. Sept. 7 at 7.)

Live / PJ Harvey / Veruca Salt—"Throwing Copper," the breakthrough record by this twentysomething combo from York, Pennsylvania, has now sold more than five million units, which puts Live somewhere between Hootie & the Blowfish and Michael Jackson in the sweepstakes for America's disposable income. And as with Hootie, their popularity is inexplicable—though frontman Ed Kowalczyk's brooding persona and I-just-drank-a-gallon-of-coffee delivery are definitely all his own. / Myth and hype surround Polly Jean Harvey, a twenty-five-year-old slip of a thing who sings of heaven, hell, and unrequited love with a voice of almost elemental force. But the truth is she's really just a rocker who fancies a bit of drama. On "To Bring You My Love," her recent album, the songs grow from monolithic grooves, over which guitars blare happily, weird noises rattle and shake, textures mutate, and an organ floats and hums. It's a record that captures the despair of the blues with a sound that's stark and unapologetic. / Several months ago, Veruca Salt were touted as the next big thing. Their first record, "American Thighs," was the fruit of a furious multi-label bidding war. Then Elastica arrived on the scene, and now Veruca Salt is the Paul Tsongas of alternative rock. (Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. Sept. 8-9 at 7.)

Goo Goo Dolls—A rock-anthem band specializing in stadium-size hooks, the Dolls blend punk, metal, and pop—sort of like the Replacements, but more starry-eyed and youthfully driven. (And the Replacements never made a habit of performing barefoot.) They'll be playing material from their recent album, "A Boy Named Goo." (Cooper Square, Third Ave. at Astor Pl. Sept. 8 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

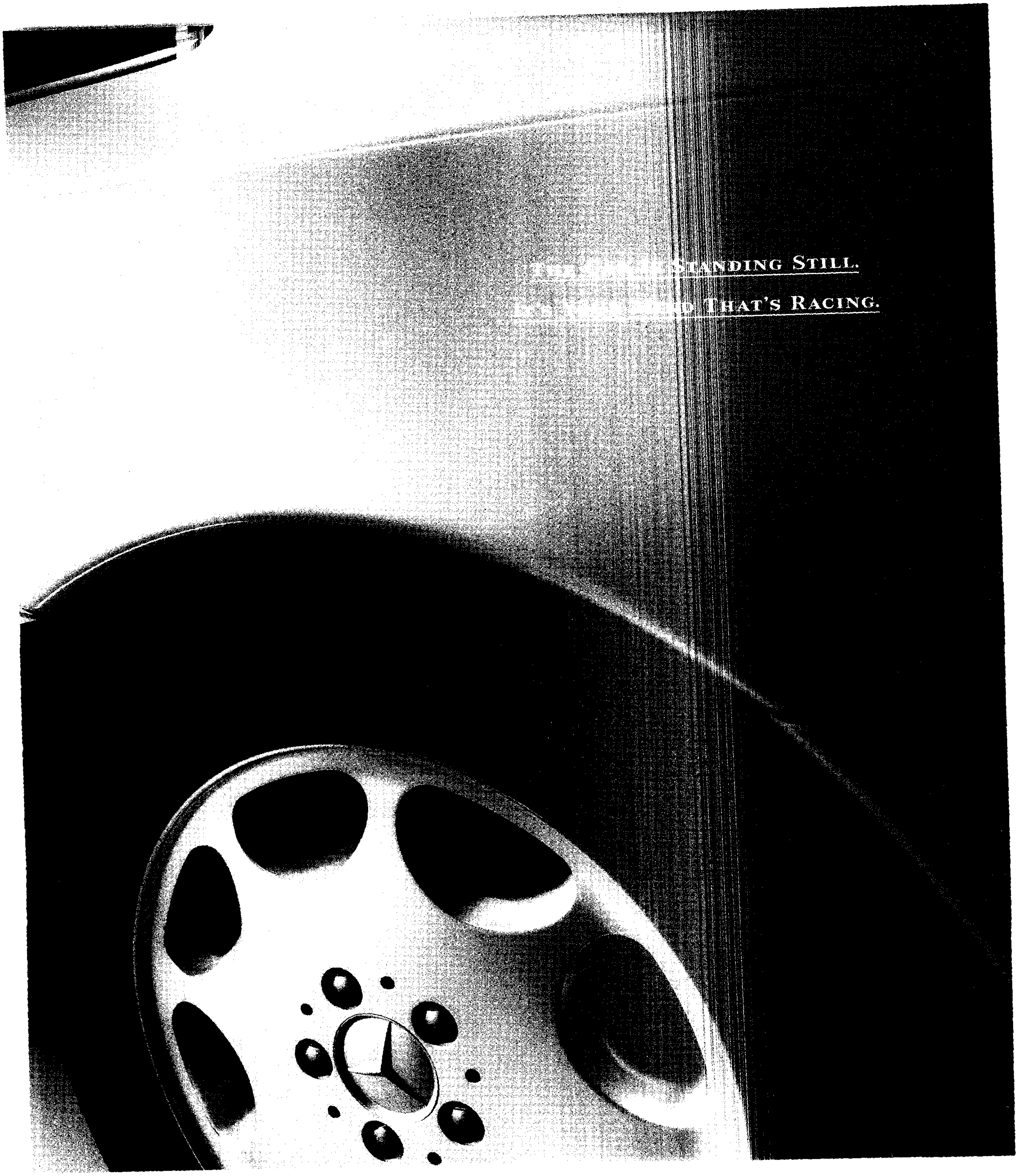
Silverchair—These Australian grunge munchkins are fronted by a sixteen-year-old Kurt Cobain look-alike, but their sound is actually a lot closer to Pearl Jam's. Schoolhouse rock never sounded so good. (Academy. Sept. 8 at 7:30.)

Rickie Lee Jones—So maybe she hasn't released anything quite as original as her first album, back in 1979. Her way with a song—the voice is a trained version of the one most people sing with when they're drunk or stoned and exhausted from cigarettes—is still morbid enough to make "Under the Boardwalk" sound like the blues. It's such a sweet, fey sound that she actually makes you wish you were sadder than you are. For this acoustic performance, she'll be performing cuts from "Naked Songs," her live album due out this month. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Sept. 8 at 8.)

David Bromberg—The enfant terrible of seventies acoustic music has spent much of the past decade and a half working as a violin maker and vintage-instrument dealer. Now he celebrates his own vintage—a fiftieth birthday—with a rare concert appearance. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sept. 9 at 8.)

Meat Puppets—Over the last fifteen years, these Arizona musicians have evolved from an independent country-punk trio to a major-label alternative-rock band. The recent "Too High to Die" earned a gold record, but the group received wider recognition when Nirvana acknowledged them as a primary inspiration. The upcoming "No Joke!" is stronger than the band's previous efforts—which is saying a lot. The album recalls the dry, sweet spirit of the Puppets' early records: country roots, blues-metal crunch, wistful harmonies and lyrics. Also appearing: Lou Barlow (from Sebadoh), whose new band, Deluxx Folk Implosion, is featured on the "Kids" soundtrack. (Manhattan Center Ballroom. Sept. 9 at 7:30.)

Smoking Popes—An up-and-coming combo with a singer whose phrasing suggests Frank Sinatra on steroids. With Menthol. (Westbeth Theatre. Sept. 9 at 9.)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Matthew Sweet—1991 was Sweet's year: a checkered career congealed into "Girlfriend," a stirring pop-rock opus built around his gentle tenor and the white-hot guitar work of Richard Lloyd. Stardom was in the air. Sweet turned up in the pages of the glossies, modelling clothes with starlets. "Altered Beast" (1993) was a bit of a no-show, but now this Nebraska-born popster has weighed in with the deceptively titled "100% Fun," wherein he confesses to being "Sick of Myself"—a sentiment at odds with the urge a lot of people feel to listen to the record over and over again. (Academy. Sept. 9 at 8.)

The Lumzy Sisters—Gospel-singing siblings from Mississippi. (World Financial Center. Sept. 10 at 3.)

Wynton Marsalis and Kathleen Battle—These two titans have collaborated on lustrous classical projects before, but this time their band spells jazz: bassist Christian McBride, pianist Cyrus Chestnut, and saxophonist James Carter are three of today's hottest young players. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Sept. 12 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **Weslia Whitfield** is currently in the midst of an extended run. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Sept. 10: the **Joe Lovano** quintet and the **Pat Martino** quartet. Lovano's fortieth birthday has passed, but despite this unfashionable circumstance there isn't a more satisfying saxophonist on the scene. He knows his history but has no need for the shackles of a self-imposed conservatism: in his world, it's possible to love Ornette Coleman as much as you do Stan Getz. Lovano has found a middle ground—he revels in openhearted swing, yet he can explode when passion dictates. His intensity on up-tempo numbers is powerfully romantic, and he's equally exquisite on ballads. Martino, the archetypal guitarist's guitarist, has won the admiration of three generations of jazz fretmen (along with that of the late Jerry Garcia). He knows how to transform knowledge, technique, and ideas into genuine music—a notion lost on most guitar manglers. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Pianist **Peter Mintun** is in charge at the Bemelmans Bar. A genuine throwback to a gentler time, this elegant performer specializes in curios from the twenties and thirties.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through Sept. 10: the **Mose Allison** trio. Still making the world safe for pissed-off musical anomalies over sixty, Allison is nothing less than a national treasure. He slams the piano like Jimmy Yancey possessed by Monk and Bartók. The **Jay Leonhart** trio takes over on Sept. 12. A resourceful bassist and clever songwriter and singer, Leonhart gets help from two swinging compatriots: pianist Bill Charlop and drummer Dennis Macreal. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A sleek piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Thursdays through Sundays, Donald Johnston is the featured pianist; on Fridays and Saturdays he performs with a trio. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—Sept. 8-9: The **Mickey Bass** quartet. For thirty years now, this intrepid foot soldier has been a reassuring sight on the bandstand, both as a sideman and as a leader. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Sept. 10: the **Don Braden** quartet. An immensely promising tenor saxophonist with old-fashioned instincts, Braden has come up with a lineup right out of the fifties: organ, guitar, and drums. Beginning Sept. 12: **Lester Bowie.** Neo-cons may consider him the arch-enemy of jazz, but few leaders have ever put together a band that generates as much fun as Bowie's Brass Fantasy. This shout-it-out-loud horn conglomerate tackles pop tunes (from Whitney Houston to Willie Nelson) along with more idiomatic—though never standard—fare. Dining.

TABLES FOR TWO

Dining around town

Uncle George's Greek Tavern, 33-19 Broadway, Astoria (1-718 626-0593)—As you wait for a table at Uncle George's ("Always Open—We Lost Our Keys"), you may find yourself beside a case of heads on the counter. Lambs' heads, roasted to a turn, are oddly stimulating to the appetite. So are the sixty chickens that you might see, rotating on spits like the wash on a tangle of tenement clotheslines. You need an excited appetite at Uncle George's: a meal here is heroic in scale.

Soon, after you're seated, a metal pitcher of retsina arrives, followed by a triple slick of dips—an assortment, or *poikilia,* that delivers thousand-volt jolts of garlic in the skordalia (a potato paste) and the tzatziki (yogurt and cucumbers), and a thousand calories in the taramosalata (a creamy fish-egg concoction). Fat grams flow on through the meal in an olive-oil stream of happiness: lamb fricassee in egg-and-lemon sauce; crumbly baby shark; a tower of pasticio (a moussaka-and-macaroni hybrid that is the comfort food of the Cyclades); sides of melted *bamies* (okra) and squishy, velvety, formerly green peas.

A big man in a suit has some crisp-crusted, stringy, caramelized meat. It's *kokoretsi,* says the waiter—lamb's heart and other organ meats wrapped in sweetbreads and roasted on a spit. He brings a slice and it tastes important, as if the entire lamb were concentrated inside, head and all.

People in suits alternate with people in cutoffs, and all look delighted with their islands of food adrift on checkered-plastic tablecloths. Above the cash register, near the seven-dollar ΜΠΑΡΜΠΑ ΓΙΩΡΓΗΣ T-shirts, hangs a portrait of the late Uncle George, his handsome belly framed in suspenders. He was from Lagio, and therefore Spartan, which doesn't seem fitting. (Open twenty-four hours, seven days. Entrées $3-$12.)

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Sept. 6-9: Piano, clarinet, and guitar with **Judy Carmichael, Dan Block,** and **Chris Flory.**

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Sept. 8: Acid jazz with the **Jazzhole.** Sept. 10: **Paul Motian.** Electric Bebop, Motian's two-guitar-and-two-sax band, is far more successful than you'd think. A smart selection of classic tunes, from Parker and Mingus to the drummer's own moody originals, gets a serious and energetic treatment. This is not fusion. Repeat: This is not fusion. Sept. 12: **Anna Domino.**

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—On Sept. 5, **Ann Hampton Callaway and Liz Callaway** begin a two-week engagement. The silver-throated Callaways—Liz is from "Cats," Ann from the world of cabaret and television theme songs—bring their charming, affably old-fashioned sister act to the great cabaret in the sky. Endowed with splendid voices and an easy, unassuming grace, they're wonderful on their own, and even better as a team. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through Sept. 10: the **Cedar Walton** trio. This pianist is a New York institution: a neo-bop stylist so firmly in control of his art that his sly chordings and dashing runs seem like second nature. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—The Chestnut Room may resemble a hunting lodge decorated by Liberace, but the performances here are no joke. Vocalist Jennifer Heaney is in through Sept. 10. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Sept. 10: the **Clark Terry** quintet. Terry is a very funny guy. He tells jokes, sings gibberish songs, and, in between, plays some of the most sophisticated flugelhorn and trumpet you've ever heard. He came up through the big bands (Basie and a brilliant stint with Ellington), and his wholly personal style blurs the line between swing and its younger brother, bop. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—Sept. 10: The Gust W. Tsilis quartet.

ROCK, ETC.

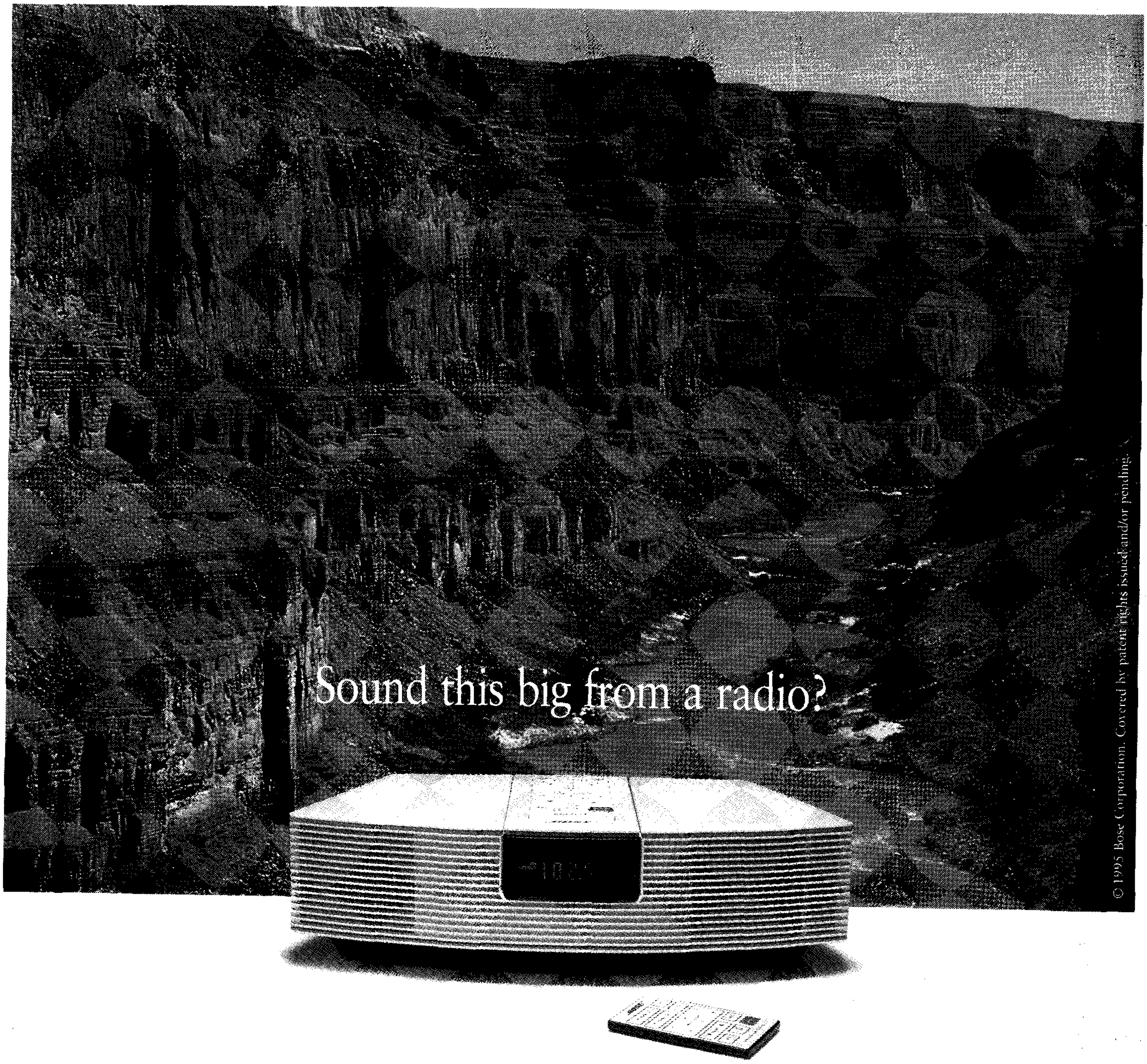
Bar d'O, 29 Bedford St. (627-1580)—Low sofas, moderne ottomans, and venetian blinds make this mirrored living room the perfect spot for late-night love. Most nights, the music is up-to-the-minute seventies, but Tuesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, gender channeller **Joey Arias** sets the ceiling fans awhirl.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Sept. 9: **Janis Ian.** After her haunting 1975 musical memoir, "At Seventeen," this onetime teen-age phenomenon ("Society's Child") went more than a decade without a record contract. In 1993, she released "Breaking Silence," a fine comeback. Her new collection is called "Revenge," a subject that this songwriter clearly understands. Sept. 10: **David Bromberg** (see Concerts). Sept. 11: **Fontella Bass.** Best known for her 1965 hit "Rescue Me," Bass is a singer with an earthshaking voice. Her most recent record, "No Ways Tired," is packed with organ-driven gospel. With **The Blind Boys of Alabama.**

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Sept. 8: Rock with Edsel and the Dirt Merchants.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender and stainless-steel vault deep in the heart of the meat district. Sept. 7: **Strapping Fieldhands.** Tuesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Sept. 6: The **Dan Zanes** trio and **Katell Keineg.** Zanes, a tall, wafer-thin hipster (and a dead ringer for Kramer on "Seinfeld"), is best remembered for his work with the Del Fuegos. He's about to release a new record, "Cool Down Time," which features Mitchel Froom and big-time session drummer Jerry Marotta. Live, he'll be joined by B-52s bassist Sara Lee. Keineg is a sulty Irish diva. Sept. 8: **Cibo Matto,** a kitschy postmodern Japanese



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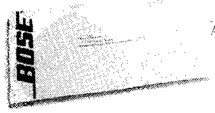


duo who sound like a low-fi Deee-lite. Sept. 9: The Candy Butchers. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. This week it offers four days of topnotch modern rock. Sept. 6: **MONSTER MAGNET.** Sept. 7: **TRIPPING DAISY.** Sept. 8: **GIRLS AGAINST BOYS.** Sept. 9: The **BOGMEN,** followed, at midnight, by **TRICKY.** A British rapper, writer, and producer, Tricky (a.k.a. Adrian Thaws) embellishes slow, sexy beats with found sounds—plinking keyboard loops, metallic guitars, industrial grind, etc. The result is dense, spare, and soulful, soothing but vaguely disturbing. His fresh and cheeky solo début, "Maxinquaye," is a hip-hop bellwether. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday. The dancers share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. *For information on the society, call 696-9737.*

Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—The rock-and-roll church. Wednesday night is Disco 2000, a fin-de-siècle blowout.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—Blues with Bobby Radcliff (Sept. 6) and Larry Garner (Sept. 7).

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—Sept. 9: **THE HEALTH & HAPPINESS SHOW.** This sprightly band, led by ex-Bongo James Mastro, called its 1993 début "Tonic," and its blend of country, folk, and rock is just that. Thanks to the exciting addition of ex-Television guitarist Richard Lloyd, "Instant Living," the group's latest, has a decidedly harder edge.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Sept. 6: Australia's **DIRTY THREE.** Sept. 8: **AIR MIAMI** and **TUSCADERO.** Sept. 9: The **BOO RADLEYS** and **IVY.** A musician's musician with a go-for-broke howl, **BARRENCE WHITFIELD** (Sept. 11) and his Savages play Stax-influenced R. & B. that ought to turn the Mercury Lounge into a lowdown roadhouse.

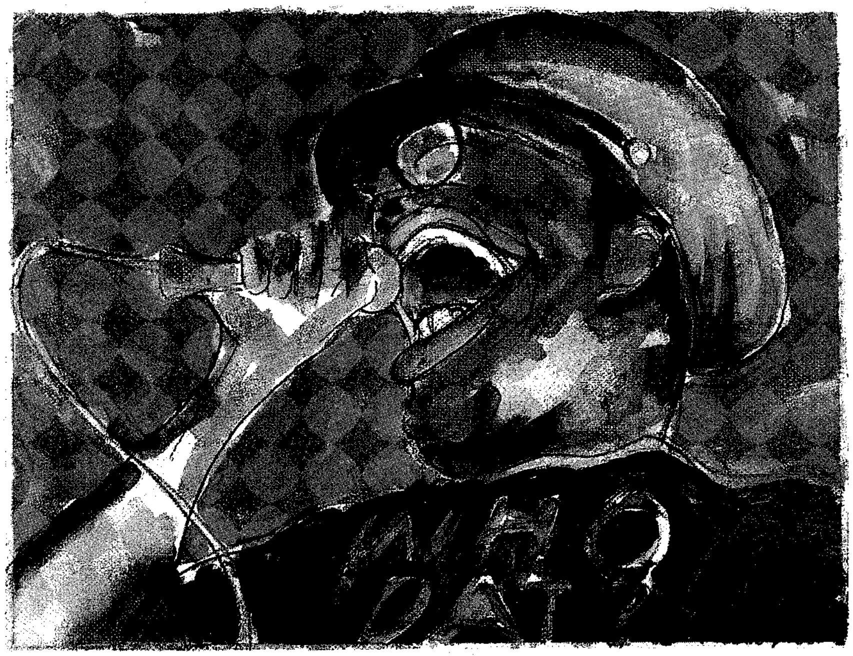
S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Sept. 7: **FLORA PURIM AND AIRTO MOREIRA.** Sept. 11: **LA INDIA.** Born in Puerto Rico and raised in the South Bronx, India is, along with her label mate Marc Anthony, a major part of the Latin new wave that has invigorated salsa with an urban sting. In 1992, her first album, "Llegó la India via Eddie Palmieri"—a collaboration with the Latin keyboard legend which bridged the gap between old-school traditionalists and young hip-hoppers—was a sensation. Her latest effort, "Dicen Que Soy," is even better: a confident collection of love songs distinguished by India's urgent delivery and her idiosyncratic soprano. Live, she's a beautiful, riveting presence, and her backup band burns hotter than the cigars she loves to puff on. Pure excitement. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Sept. 6: "Blue in the Face," the loose, riffing brother of Wayne Wang and Paul Auster's "Smoke," features a soundtrack so packed with talent that it threatens to overwhelm the film. This special event features clips from the movie, along with performances by "Smoke" alumni: **DAVID BYRNE,** the painfully cool **SOUL COUGHING** (who will also back up Byrne), rapper **SPEARHEAD** (whose "Hole in the Bucket" is one of this year's finest), and singer **PAULA COLE.**

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—**PIZZICATO FIVE,** a Tokyo trio that plays very groovy American-style pop, brings its slightly insane, danceable fun to town on Sept. 6. With **RUN ON.** Sept. 7-9: The great **RAY CHARLES.** Brother Ray has often compared his singing to Bette Davis's acting. At first, it's hard to imagine a less likely pair—imagine them (or their fans) in the same room. But on a higher, artistic plane, the two have a lot in common. They both possess extraordinary technique and a hyperbolic style fuelled by a vivid, commanding personality. They both broke the molds of their more conventional predecessors by making fearlessly ugly sounds and faces, twitching and swaying to drive home a point. And despite their larger-than-life personas, they could never hide the fact that everything they did came from a deep, vulnerable place of truth and feeling. Thanks to Tramps, which is celebrating its twentieth year in business, you can now see Ray Charles up close, along with his orchestra and the legendary Raeletts. Bette Davis played Tramps, too, but only onscreen.

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Sept. 6: A hepcat Wednesday with eight-string guitarist **CHARLIE HUNTER,** slide guitarist **BEN HARPER,** and the **LAST POETS.** Sept. 8: **JOHN DOE** (formerly of X) and the **DAN ZANES** trio (see Fez). Sept. 9: **ECHOBELLY.**



Barrence Whitfield, at the Mercury Lounge.

MICHAEL CRAWFORD

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"American Relief Sculpture" features bronze, marble, and plaster works by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Herbert Adams, Karl Bitter, Olin Levi Warner, and others. Through Oct. 16. . . . ¶ The fifty-three paintings, drawings, and watercolors that make up the Annenberg collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterworks are on view. Through Nov. 26. . . . ¶ "An Egyptian Bestiary," a large non-petting zoo of falcons, baboons, hippos, and ibis, in stone, ivory, gold, bronze, and wood. Through Oct. 15. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden is open, when weather permits, until Oct. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Video Spaces: Eight Installations" presents some widely divergent sculptural uses of the medium. The best piece is by Tony Oursler: a tiny, limp doll with the face of a screaming woman projected onto its head. A challenging and sometimes rewarding exhibition. Through Sept. 12. . . . ¶ Leon Levinstein's street photographs of people in New York neighborhoods from the fifties through the seventies. Through Oct. 12. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Georg Baselitz." A large survey of work by the East German neo-expressionist painter famous for his upside-down figures. Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ "Josef Albers: Glass, Color, and Light." A beautiful and unusual exhibition of paintings on glass, glass constructions, oil paintings, and photographs. Through Sept. 17. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

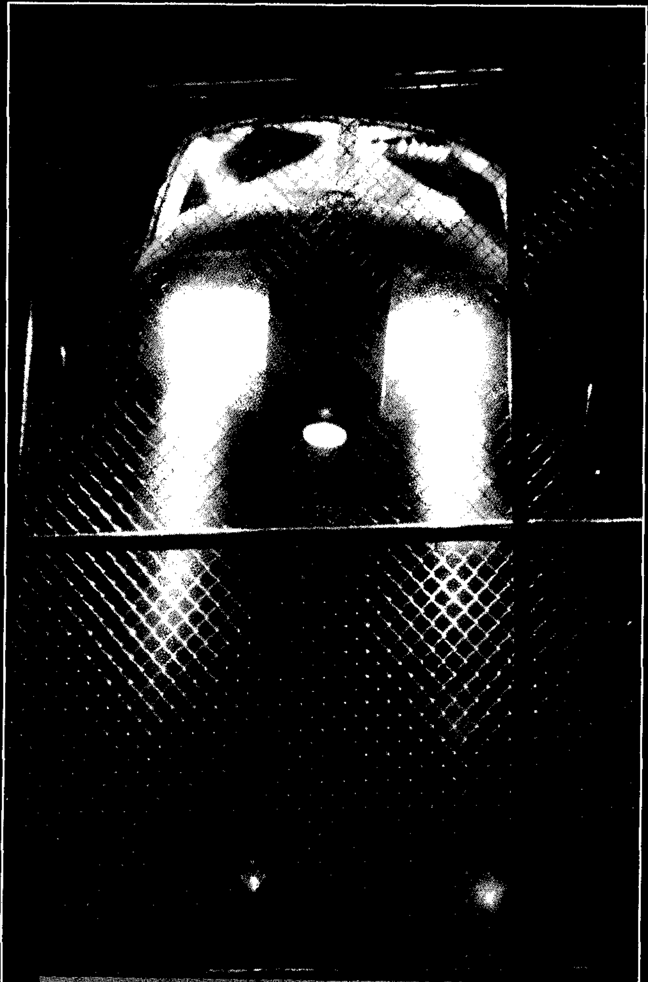
Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—A survey of the conceptual photography of Dieter Appelt, supplemented by sculptural objects made by the artist for inclusion in these images. Through Nov. 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

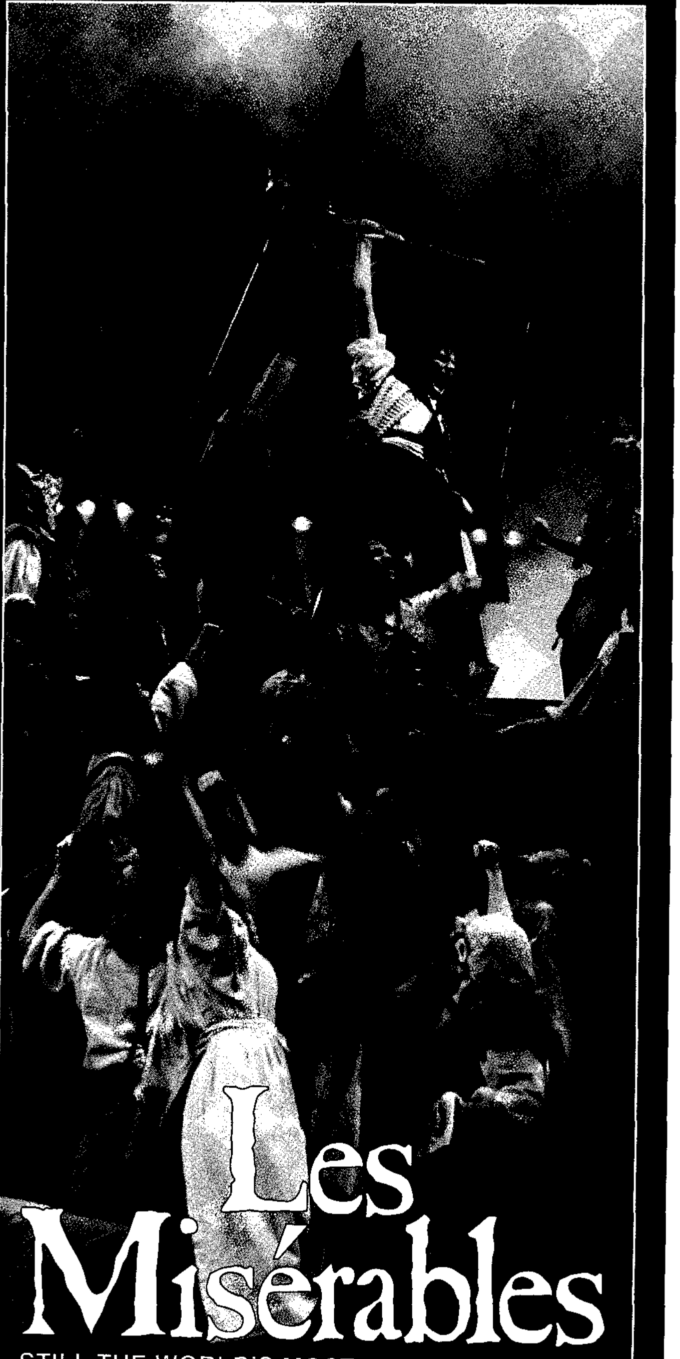
Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A terrific and illuminating double bill: "Edward Hopper and the American Imagination" (through Oct. 15) and "Florine Stettheimer: Manhattan Fantastica" (through Nov. 5). Hopper's work, with its solitary figures moving like somnambulists through otherwise vacant streets and interiors, embodies a very American vision of urban loneliness transformed by inexplicable moments of transcendence. Stettheimer, by contrast, epitomized, in both her art and her life, the fertile marriage of café society and the avant-garde. Her effervescent paintings record the milieu she cultivated (it was quite a set: Carl Van Vechten, Parker Tyler, Virgil Thomson, and Marcel Duchamp were all among the regulars) in moods of brittle irony and poetic reverie. . . . ¶ "Views from Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art." Through Oct. 1. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A hundred and forty botanical watercolors, illustrations, engravings, and lithographs are on view; a third of them are of orchids. Among the artists represented are Pierre-Joseph Redouté, Margaret Mee, Marilena Pistoia, and Georg Dionys Ehret. . . . ¶ The skeletons of some one hundred saurischian and ornithischian dinosaurs have been cleaned and repositioned, and they're waiting for you. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Contemporary British Architecture," a survey of recent projects, composed of drawings, paintings, photographs, and models from the last four summer exhibitions of Britain's Royal Academy of Arts. The visions of Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, Lucy Malein, Nicholas Grimshaw, and the late James Stirling are among those on view. Through

THE BEST OF BROADWAY





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Sept. 17. . . . ¶ A display of American Impressionist paintings from the Academy's collection includes works by Chase, Sargent, Hassam, and Parker. Through Sept. 15. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W.—"On the Avenue, Fifth Avenue," a trim little exhibition of prints, photographs, architectural drawings, and historical objects devoted to the evolution of our great thoroughfare, which suggests that once upon a time New York really *was* paradise. A photograph of St. Luke's Hospital, at 54th Street, reveals that in 1865 the Avenue was a country lane. Architect George B. Post's cross-sectional view of Cornelius Vanderbilt's mansion makes even a servant's life in those days look dreamy. (Don't miss the portrait in the corridor outside, by an unknown painter, of Edward Hyde, Viscount Cornbury—an eighteenth-century governor of New York—posed coquettishly in full drag, with an ivory fan. Really.) Through Sept. 17. . . . ¶ In "Treasury of the Past," an object or a set of objects representing each year from 1750 to 1950 is on view. Through Sept. 17. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5, and Wednesday evenings until 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Writers in Wartime: Looking at World War II," a selection of diaries, letters, first editions, and working proofs by Mann, Auden, Woolf, Hellman, Steinbeck, Kerouac, and others. Through Oct. 7. (Berg Collection. Closed Mondays.) . . . ¶ "What Price Freedom" features twenty objects, from a Jefferson draft of the Declaration of Independence to a student handbill distributed in Tiananmen Square. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall.) . . . ¶ The librarians have chosen a hundred and fifty books, ranging from rare editions to dog-eared paperbacks, as the "Books of the Century." Through Oct. 28. (Third Floor Gallery.) (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Jean Dubuffet (1901-85)—Boldly colorful paintings from the early eighties that recall earlier works in the artist's *art brut* œuvre. Through Sept. 30. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jackson Pollock (1912-56)—Twenty-five newfound works, painted between 1934 and 1951. Opens Sept. 12. Through Oct. 28. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

"1937—American Abstract Art"—Paintings and painted constructions by the "second wave" of American modernists, several of whom founded the American Abstract Artists group in that year. Included are works by Giorgio Cavallon, Burgoyne Diller, Charles Shaw, John Ferren, and Charles Biederman. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 28. (Snyder, 20 W. 57th St.)

"American Interiors"—Paintings and sculptures on that theme, by Richard Diebenkorn, Louise Bourgeois, Hans Hofmann, Milton Avery, Joseph Cornell, David Smith, Ross Bleckner, and others. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 7. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

"Male Desire"—Summer camp, in the form of homoerotic art by thirty artists. The show is not (or not merely) an exercise in lubriciousness. We are reminded, for example, that George Bellows and Grant Wood were just as obsessed with manliness as was Tom of Finland, whose simpering black-leather bimbos are starting to look like classics. Rockwell Kent's brawny sailor boys and J. C. Leyendecker's flawless preppies could have moonlighted as models for Paul Cadmus's very amusing "YMCA Locker Room." Also included are six etchings by David Hockney from his influential suite based on poems by Constantine Cavafy, and work by Eric Fischl, Keith Haring, Larry Rivers, John Button, and Andy Warhol. Through Sept. 16. (Ryan, 24 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Roger Ackling / Will Mentor—Found pieces of wood with patterns that the artist has burned into them with the aid of the sun and a magnifying glass. / Botanical works on paper. Both shows open Sept. 7 and continue through Oct. 7. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

Jack Featherly—The artist's first New York solo show offers multi-image paintings, à la Rosenquist or Rauschenberg, with figures that evoke an idealized home life of the fifties and sixties. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 7. (Freire, 580 Broadway.)

Felix Gonzalez-Torres—The artist's new work, "Untitled (Vultures)" (1995), consists of fourteen framed photographs of the birds of prey, singly or in groups, but you wouldn't know it, since they either look abstract or like tiny gray specks in a gray sky. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 14. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

Robert Harms—Abstract paintings inspired by the lay of the land in the Hamptons. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 7. (Beitzel, 102 Prince St.)

Bill Jensen—Six abstract paintings with covert allusions to landscape. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 21. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Jean Lowe and Kim MacConnel—An oversized papier-mâché bull painted with Indian-style garlands and surrounded by red-and-white-striped walls. Through Sept. 30. (Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St.)

David Rabinowitch—"Box Trough Assemblages" (1963), sculptures made with many sixty-by-forty-inch sheets of metal. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 28. (Blum, 99 Wooster St.)

OTHER VENUES

"Affirmative Actions: Artists at Work"—Creative Time's twelfth annual "Art in the Anchorage" exhibition, held in the vaults of the Brooklyn Bridge, consists of nine large-scale installations that cross disciplines and mediums: a "Medicinal Garden," by Joan Bankemper; a large suspended model of the Brooklyn Bridge, by Karin Giusti in collaboration with faculty and students from Brooklyn College; a Friday-and-Saturday-night cabaret; theatrical performances; skateboarding displays and a competition; and much more. Through Sept. 14. (Cadman Plaza West at Front St., Brooklyn. Thursdays through Sundays, 1 to 6. For schedules, directions, and other information, call 206-6674.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Swann Galleries—An auction of books about art and architecture. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Sept. 7 at 10:30 A.M.)

Antiquarian Book Fair—This year's installment welcomes a dozen dealers new to the show. (Metropolitan Antiques, 110 W. 19th St. 463-0200. Sept. 8-10.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

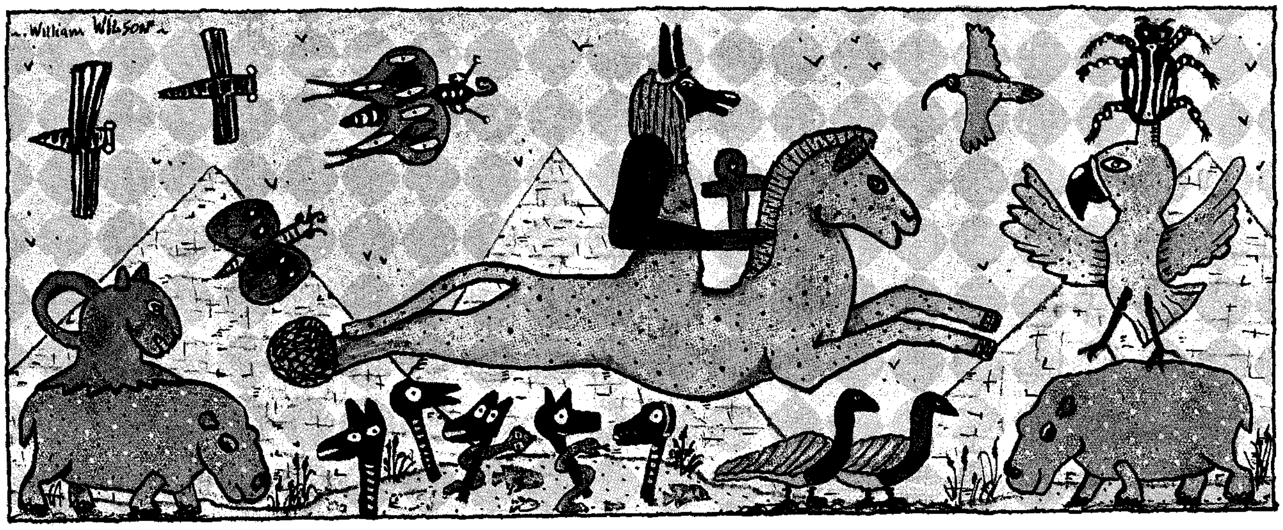
Dieter Appelt / Edward Weston (1886-1958)—Conceptual self-portraiture, often in the form of several photographs arranged in grids. (A retrospective of Appelt's work is at the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, through Nov. 5.) / A group of rare, vintage prints from the twenties through the early forties, along with several of the photographer's pepper and shell studies. Both shows open Sept. 7 and continue through Oct. 14. (Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

Jimmy De Sana (1950-90)—A survey of the artist's career, including black-and-white photographs from the books "101 Nudes" and "Submission," color work that is more experimental, and portraits from the worlds of music and art. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 22. (Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Jim Dow—Color views of the corner shops of England: pubs, pie shops, florists, haberdasheries, and other establishments. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 16. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

Günther Förg—Large black-and-white photographs of libraries, theatres, ministries, and other buildings designed and built in Moscow in the twenties and thirties. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 21. (Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St.)

Allen Ginsberg—Recent portraits and views from the artist's window, along with pictures of his Beat friends—Kerouac, Bur-



"An Egyptian Bestiary," at the Metropolitan Museum.

WILLIAM WILSON

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– Attache of Terry C. Plauché,
Landscape Architect,
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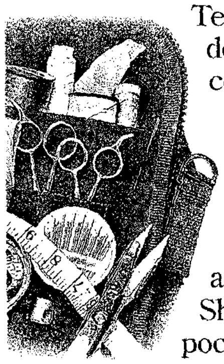

Then, there's Leah Witzig, the quilter, who travels to quilting conferences around the country. She likes all our pockets and dividers. She stuffs them with fabrics, scissors, spools of thread, even her lunch.

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– Attache of Leah Witzig, Quiltmaker,
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McFotheringham

The gallery season gets under way.

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM

roughs, Cassady, et al. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 7. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Frank Gohlke—A selection of landscapes shot during the past twenty-three years: grain elevators, snow-blanketed farms, Northeastern river valleys, post-tornado Wichita Falls (Texas), and post-eruption Mt. St. Helens, to name just a few. Opens Sept. 8. Through Oct. 14. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

Marilyn Minter—A painter who early on was a photography student of Diane Arbus's here exhibits a suite of black-and-white pictures shot in 1969 but not shown until this year. The images are of the artist's mother, a well-heeled drug addict who lived alone in a Miami apartment complex. Opens Sept. 9. Through Oct. 8. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

Alexander Rodchenko (1891-1956)—Thirty Constructivist photographs and photomontages made between 1923 and 1938. Opens Sept. 5. Through Oct. 31. (Schickler, 52 E. 76th St.)

Karl Struss (1886-1981)—Platinum and palladium prints of the New York that was, by the Manhattan-born Photo-Secessionist and cinematographer ("Sunrise," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "The Fly"). Through Oct. 14. (Equitable Gallery, Seventh Ave. at 52nd St. Opens Saturdays at noon.)

Penelope Umbrico—New abstract work. One series consists of rephotographed found images of milling crowds and of cemeteries. Another group contains images of hair and skin lifted from magazines, transferred to glass, and then made into photogram-like contact prints. Opens Sept. 7. Through Oct. 14. (Saul, 560 Broadway.)

Todd Webb / Andrew Moore—"New York, 1946," vintage prints of scenes in Harlem, on the Third Avenue El platform, in Chinatown, at Coney Island, and on the Lower East Side. / Large-scale works from the series "New York Variations," in which the artist conflates architectural details (from the Public Library, the old City Hall subway station, the ruins of the mental hospital on Roosevelt Island), producing poetic explorations of the city. Both shows open Sept. 7 and continue through Oct. 15. (Richardson, 560 Broadway.)

"Being There"—The existential aspects of landscape photography as elucidated by curator Vik Muniz. Included are works by Gustave LeGray, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Richard Misrach, Gaylen Gerber, and Frederick Sommer. Opens Sept. 12. Through Oct. 7. (Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Nagasaki Journey: The Photographs of Yosuke Yamahata." Pictures taken in that city on August 10, 1945, the day after the bombing, by a twenty-eight-year-old Japanese Army photographer. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ The war in the Pacific, as seen through the cover photographs and photo essays of *Life* magazine correspondents. Through Oct. 1. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"An American Century of Photography: From Dry-Plate to Digital—The Hallmark Photographic Collection." Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ "Eyes on an Era." Pictures from the thirties through the sixties by photojournalist Irving Haberman. Through Sept. 10. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum SoHo.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Brush with Politics

CAN an artist confront contemporary political issues and still remain true to art? The question seems almost bizarre today, when so many works *are* political statements. But in the early nineteen-thirties it burned in Paul Hindemith's mind as hot as the bonfires the Nazis were stoking with books.

"Mathis der Maler," which will open New York City Opera's fall season on September 7, can easily be interpreted as an anti-Nazi work, and to some extent it is. Before the opera was completed, Hindemith extracted a three-movement symphony from it, and when the textless symphony was premièred, in 1934, even that was enough to put the composer's name on the Nazis' official blacklist. Goebbels obviously recognized that although Hindemith's libretto dealt with the life of a painter during a peasant uprising in the sixteenth century—when book burning, prominent in the opera, was in its infancy—it had contemporary resonance. Moreover, the opera sounds a chord as relevant today as in the nineteen-thirties—or in the sixteenth century. That its score is one of Hindemith's most luminous serves to soften the bitterness, but nevertheless the message is clear: in the end, the painter, convinced that his art has no place in the brutality that surrounds him, packs away his brushes.

OPERA

New York City Opera—The fall season, which continues through Nov. 19, opens with Hindemith's **mathis der maler,** in a new production featuring baritone William Stone in the title role, and Lauren Flanigan, Mary Dunleavy, and Allan Glassman; Christopher Keene conducts. (Sept. 7 at 8 and Sept. 10 at 1:30.) . . . **turandot.** (Sept. 8 and Sept. 12 at 8.) . . . **rigoletto.** (Sept. 9 at 1:30.) . . . **la traviata.** (Sept. 9 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Supertitles are displayed at all performances.)

Amato Opera—The season opens with a new production of "Tosca." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 9 at 7:30 and Sept. 10 at 2:30.)

CONCERTS

Bargemusic—Pianist Diane Walsh performs Bach's "English" Suite No. 6; violinist Carmit Zori, violist Robert Rinehart, and cellist Fred Sherry play Hindemith's String Trio; and all join for Brahms's C-Minor Piano Quartet. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Sept. 7 at 7:30 and Sept. 10 at 4.)

Chamber Music—Cellist Owen Young (of the Boston Symphony) and pianist Alan Murchie perform Beethoven's A-Major Cello Sonata; Chris Wu (of the Pittsburgh Symphony) and Mr. Murchie offer Debussy's Violin Sonata; and all three team up for Dvořák's F-Minor Trio. (St. James's Church, Madison Ave. at 81st St. Sept. 7 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

City Island Baroque Ensemble—The chamber orchestra offers concertos by Haydn (with cellist Inbal Segev) and Vivaldi (with oboist Igor Leschishin). (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. Sept. 10 at noon.)

Queens Symphony Orchestra—Abba Bogin conducts Broadway favorites, as well as works by Beethoven, Mozart, and Tchaikovsky. (Seuffert Band Shell, Forest Park, Woodhaven. Sept. 10 at 5. No tickets necessary.)

Salon Soirées—Yuri Kim performs solo-piano works by Schumann and assists cellist Inbal Segev in Beethoven's Cello Sonata No. 4. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Sept. 10 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.)

LISTENING BOOTH

Caplet/Debussy/Ravel: Prix de Rome Cantatas (Marco Polo)—For more than a century, beginning in 1803, the Paris Conservatoire's composition students vied for the annual Grand Prix de Rome, which forced cognoscenti to scrutinize their work and subsidized their residencies in the Eternal City. Berlioz, Gounod, Thomas, Bizet, and Massenet all won (as did a host of flashes in the pan), but nearly all their entries have been overshadowed by their more mature successes. The very impressive Paris-Sorbonne Choir and Orchestra and some fine soloists, directed by Jacques Grimbert, here revive a number of fascinating and delightful submissions. André Caplet's elegiac cantata "Myrrha" (which won in 1901) announced an exceptional talent; so did Debussy's sparkling choral movement "Le Printemps" (a semifinal-round winner that paved the way to victory in the 1884 finals for his "L'Enfant Prodigue"). Ravel's five preliminary-round entries are collected here as well; the fact that he never won brought disgrace to the competition's administration, but a back-to-back comparison of his and Caplet's 1901 entries helps vindicate the jury's decision.

Mozart: Requiem (Telarc)—Mozart died, of course, before completing his final masterpiece, leaving holes for generations of editors to fill in. A new version by the multifaceted Mozartean Robert Levin blends exhaustive musicology with the subtle insight of an informed performer, and it will probably be embraced as a standard edition. Unfortunately, this first recording, in which Martin Pearlman directs Boston Baroque, falls short of the group's usual attainments: the excellent soloists and period-instrument orchestra consistently outperform a merely adequate chorus. Still, it's a must-hear for Wolfgang worshippers.

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducts Weber's two piano concertos (featuring David Buechner), Beethoven's scena "Ah! Perfido" (with soprano Shirley Verrett), and a suite of ballet music by Gluck. (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. Sept. 11 at 2 and 7 and Sept. 12 at 8. For information about tickets, call 799-1259.)

Nightingale Night—New Yorkers went wild on hearing the soprano Jenny Lind for the first time, at a concert at Castle Garden in 1850. Presented by P. T. Barnum, who had laid the groundwork for her début with a publicity campaign of unprecedented scope, the Swedish Nightingale became an immediate superstar. Doubtless her singing was superb, reason to regret that she died just as the age of recording was dawning. Her most enduring impact, however, probably had more to do with the cult of celebrity: she became as well known for her astronomical fees (a portion of which, her publicists declared, she donated to charity) and her product endorsements (pianos, cigars, sewing machines) as for her concerts. An assemblage of distinguished singers will celebrate Lind's one-hundred-and-seventy-fifth anniversary year at the site of her American début, with two all-but-retired Swedish sopranos—Birgit Nilsson and Elisabeth Söderström—heading the roster. Both are expected to sing, at least briefly, as will sopranos Martile Rowland and Stella Zambalis and tenor Stanford Olsen (among others), who will offer repertoire associated with their great predecessor. Francis Heilbut will assist at the piano, and Pia Lindstrom will round out the proceedings with readings from relevant letters and poetry. (Castle Clinton National Monument, Battery Park. Sept. 11 at 7:45. For information about tickets, call 866-2086.)

Musicans Accord—The chamber ensemble presents five works by Joel Feigin. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 11 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

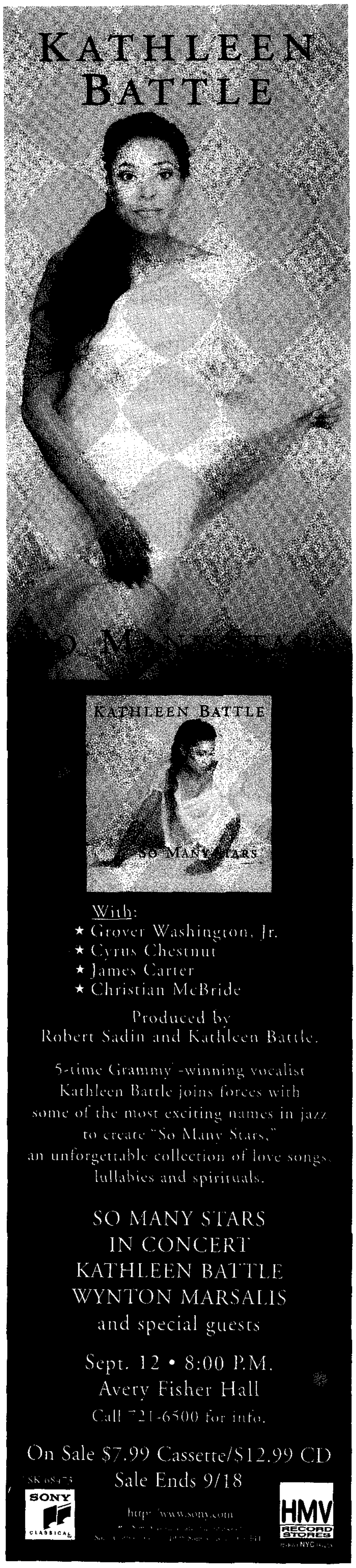
41. Nd7!!—Starting this week, on the hundred and seventh floor of the World Trade Center, the two highest ranked grand masters of chess, Garry Kasparov of Russia and Viswanathan Anand of India, compete head-to-head in a best-of-twenty championship series that could last up to a month. Kasparov, who is considered virtually unbeatable when he plays white, confounded Anand at a recent event in Riga, Latvia, when he opened with a new twist on a gambit invented by an English mariner in the nineteenth century. Anand, the world's fastest player, resigned that day after twenty-five moves but defeated the world champion a week and a half later in Moscow, in a time-controlled contest more favorable to his superior speed. Still, to become the first non-Russian world champion since Bobby Fischer, the blitz-chess challenger will need to come up with tactical complexity in the seven-hour format; under those expansive circumstances, the champion's maneuvers can resemble those of his hero, Alexander Alekhine, whose attacks, as Kasparov has written, "came suddenly, like destructive thunderstorms that erupted from a clear sky." (Intel World Chess Championship, Two World Trade Center. Sept. 11-Oct. 13. For more information, call 1-800 388-5464.)

Coney Ireland—The Irish Festival at the Steeplechase Fairgrounds will feature Hibernian food (cabbage, soda bread, rashers of bacon), crafts (blackthorn sticks, Murphy's Stout), and such bands as Black 47 and Big Geraniums. "Any place you go, you're going to find a bar," promises festival coördinator Al O'Hagan. "Give the kids some money to go on the rides, and say, 'Here's where we are.' " (Coney Island, Brooklyn. Sept. 9-10 from 10 to 7. For more information, call 1-718 891-6622.)

Readings—Sept. 7 at 6:30: David Ramus, a former art dealer (he admits it) who faces charges of defrauding his clients of close to a million dollars (he denies it), reads from "Thief of Light," his new novel about an art-forgery scheme gone wrong, which he sold to HarperCollins for a million dollars. (Rizzoli, 454 West Broadway. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 9 at 2: Poet Mark Strand (author of the 1964 collection "Sleeping with One Eye Open" and last year's "Dark Harbor") will read from his work. (110 W. 19th St. No charge beyond admission to the Metropolitan Antiquarian Book Fair.) . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 8: Novelist Mary McGarry Morris reads from her latest, "Songs in Ordinary Time." (Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 6:30: Robin Hirsch reads from his memoir, "Last Dance at the Hotel Kempinski," about the Jewish diaspora following the Holocaust. (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. No tickets necessary.)

Talk—Sept. 6 at 6: Following a screening of highlights of Betty White's television work, from fifties-era game shows to baby-boomer sitcoms, the comedienne will chat and answer questions. (Museum of Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. For more information, call 621-6600.)

Tour—Sept. 9 at 1: Adventure on a Shoestring paces out Hell's Hundred Acres, the Colonial farmland that became SoHo. For more information, call 265-2663.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THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Last of the Dogmen—Tom Berenger plays a bounty hunter who, while on the trail of escaped convicts, stumbles upon a lost tribe of Cheyenne Indians living in the Rocky Mountains; Barbara Hershey co-stars as an anthropologist who helps him research his discovery. Written and directed by Tab Murphy. Opening September 8. (Lincoln Square.)

National Lampoon's Senior Trip—Matt Frewer, Tommy Chong, Valerie Mahaffey, and Kevin McDonald star in Kelly Makin's comedy about a group of high schoolers on a visit to Washington, D.C. Written by Roger Kumble and I. Marlene King. Opening September 8. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

1-900—A man (Ad van Kempen) and a woman (Ariane Schluter) carry on a relationship by telephone, in a film directed by Theo van Gogh. Adapted by the two stars, Marcel Otten, and Johan Doesburg from the latter's 1994 play, "06." In Dutch. Opening September 8. (Quad Cinema.)

The Promise—Margarethe von Trotta's romantic tragedy follows two lovers (played as youths by Anian Zollner and Meret Becker and as adults by August Zirner and Corinna Harfouch) whose lives are affected by the construction and eventual collapse of the Berlin Wall. Written by the director and Peter Schneider. In German. Opening September 8. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Theremin—An Electronic Odyssey—A documentary, by Steven M. Martin, that examines the life of Leon Theremin, the Russian scientist who in 1920 invented the first electronic musical instrument. Opening September 8. (Cinema Village.)

The Tie That Binds—Daryl Hannah and Keith Carradine play criminals out to reclaim the six-year-old daughter they have given up for adoption, in a thriller written by Michael Auerbach and directed by Wesley Strick. With Vincent Spano and Moira Kelly as the unlucky new parents. Opening September 8. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar—A comedy directed by Beeban Kidron, starring Wesley Snipes, Patrick Swayze, and John Leguizamo. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening September 8. (34th St. East, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and National Twin.)

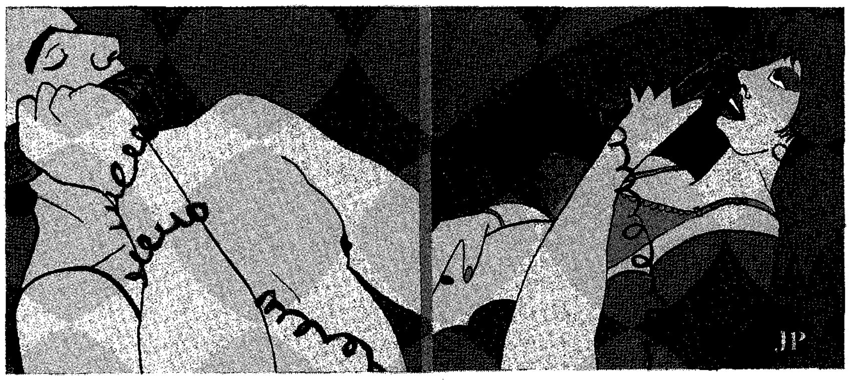
CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 28.)

Apollo 13—Ron Howard's movie, like the perilous 1970 lunar mission itself, gets home safely only by the skin of its teeth. Dean Cundey's cinematography is drab, James Horner's score is unbearable, and Howard retards the momentum with frequent cutaways to the astronauts' families, who are, unsurprisingly, mighty worried. But the acting—especially by Tom Hanks, Kevin Bacon, and Bill Paxton (as the astronauts) and Ed Harris (as a NASA flight controller)—is sharp and persuasive. And the screenplay, by William Broyles, Jr., and Al Reinert, makes the scientific details both comprehensible and exciting. In the end, this failed mission seems like the most impressive achievement of the entire space program: a triumph not of planning but of inspired improvisation.—T.R. (7/10/95) (Village East Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 23rd St. West Triplex, Ziegfeld, and Regency.)

Babe—Despite the improbable articulateness of the creatures in Chris Noonan's wonderfully imaginative talking-animal movie, they remain in character as animals: the movie never lets us forget that they don't see the world the same way we do. (The illusion of speech is created with a variety of technical means, including computer-animated mouth movements and, here and there, animatronic stand-ins for the live animal stars.) The title character is a piglet who wants to be a sheepdog. Babe and his friends—notably, a farmwise duck and a pair of proud Border collies—act out a comedy of animal manners that is much funnier and much cannier than any recent movie about human relationships: a lovely, stubbornly idiosyncratic fable of aspiration and survival. With James Cromwell and Magda Szubanski. The screenplay, by Noonan and George Miller, is based on a children's novel by Dick King-Smith.—T.R. (9/4/95) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Beyond Rangoon—John Boorman's mysteriously graceful adventure movie is set in Burma in 1988. A depressed American traveller (Patricia Arquette) becomes separated from her tour group and enters the dense, dangerous wilderness of the real Burma, where she falls into the company of political dissidents and winds up running for her life. The movie evokes the day-to-day experience of living in a dictatorship—the sti-



Opening September 8, Ad van Kempen and Ariane Schluter in "1-900."

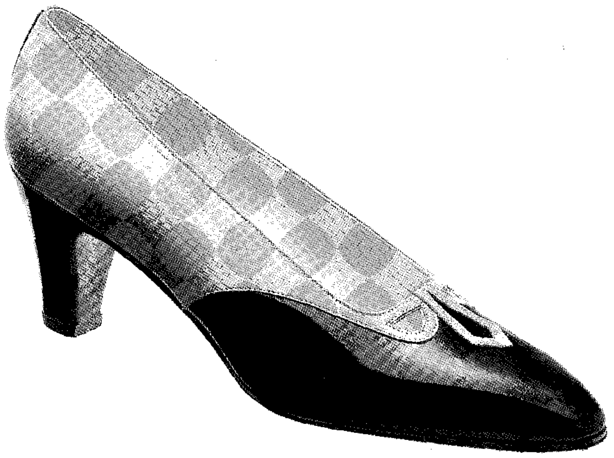
JP FORREST

fling, helpless sensation of being pinned to the ground with a soldier's boot on your neck. While the story has more than its share of thrilling incidents, even the most elaborately staged scenes don't function merely as set pieces; Boorman's sense of rhythm gives the picture an arrowlike momentum that makes it seem much shorter than its ninety-nine minutes. It's an exciting film and, in the end, an overwhelmingly moving one—a masterpiece. Also with U Aung Ko, Frances McDormand, and Spalding Gray. Screenplay by Alex Lasker and Bill Rubenstein; cinematography by John Seale.—T.R. (8/21-28/95) (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Brian Wilson: I Just Wasn't Made for These Times—Don Was's black-and-white documentary is a fascinating portrait of the pop-music wizard Brian Wilson, the prime mover of the Beach Boys. A reclusive and dauntingly odd figure even in the group's sixties heyday, Wilson has acquired, in the years since, the reputation of a brilliant mind gone gaga—a casualty of drugs, depression, and its own unendurable complexity. The fifty-two-year-old man we see here still looks a little shaky, but he's holding himself together well enough to make some terrific music; in the movie's terms, that's all that matters. A recording session in which Wilson belts out glorious new versions of a few of his best songs gives the picture its satisfying shape. He plays them with unaccountable fervor: he seems to be opening his heart. The cast of talking-heads commentators includes Wilson's mother, his daughters (Wendy and Carnie, of Wilson Phillips), his brother (and fellow Beach Boy) Carl, and an eclectic bunch of admiring musicians.—T.R. (9/4/95) (Quad Cinema.)

The Brothers McMullen—Repressed-Catholic-coming-of-age stories have formed the basis of dozens of memoirs and novels and films, so there must be some other reason that this old-fashioned picture about three Irish-American brothers on Long Island and their fumbled dealings with women has struck such a nerve—perhaps because it's one of the rare romantic comedies aimed primarily at the fantasies of straight men. The movie was written and directed by the twenty-seven-year-old Edward Burns, who also co-stars as the cynical middle brother. His character gets a lot of mileage early on out of mean-spirited locker-room humor about his fear of commitment; his conversion to true love at the end is, by comparison, perfunctory and unconvincing.—S.K. (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising According to Marek Edelman—During the early forties, Nazi cameramen filmed the life that was being led, and lost, inside the walls of the Warsaw ghetto. The young Polish director Jolanta Dylewska has fashioned some of this archival footage into what feels like a concentrated act of mourning: as figures move through the streets or walk toward the trains that will transport them to the camps, portions of the frame are blown up so that individual faces can be scrutinized, and the film slows, often to a dead stop. Over these scenes we hear music that is sometimes too insistent (although there is a moving lullaby at the end); intercut with them we see the face of Marek Edelman, who was one of the commanders of the resistance movement (a bunch of "grown-up children," he calls its members, grave and resolute far beyond their years) that rose up for a few months in 1943. His manner is as pugnacious and unsentimental as the acts of courage that he recalls. Many Holocaust movies approach their task with a dutiful grandeur, an encyclopedic attempt to encompass the breadth of the crime. Dylewska's work leans the other way, toward absolute specificity: she relies on single images, and on Edelman's astounding memory for names and fleeting details, to suggest a world of suffering and endeavor.



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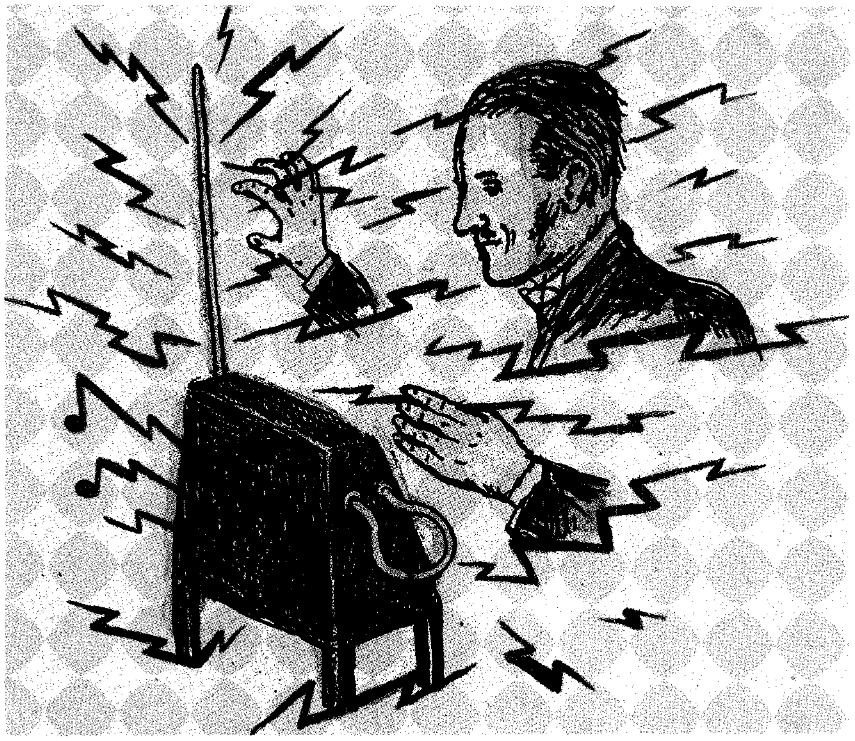


Opening September 8, "Theremin—An Electronic Odyssey."

JONATHAN ROSEN

Dangerous Minds—LouAnne Johnson (Michelle Pfeiffer), a divorced ex-Marine, teaches English in an urban Northern California high school, and her students are an unruly, education-resistant bunch—that is, a typical supporting cast for the heroic-teacher genre. Thanks to Pfeiffer's inventive acting, John N. Smith's movie does a fairly entertaining job of capturing the unscrupulous, guerrilla-like cunning of a good teacher in a bad school. But the cut-to-the-enlightenment dramaturgy of Ronald Bass's screenplay feels desperate and false. And in the final scenes the movie gets as sticky as "To Sir with Love." It canonizes the heroine needlessly: Pfeiffer looks plenty good without a halo. Also with George Dzundza and Courtney B. Vance. Based on Johnson's memoir, "My Posse Don't Do Homework."—T.R. (8/21-28/95) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, and 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through Sept. 7. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting Sept. 8.)

Desperado—Robert Rodriguez' sequel to his 1993 "El Mariachi," with Antonio Banderas as the mariachi without a name. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Hyde—Tim Daly and Sean Young star in David Price's gender-bending update of Robert Louis Stevenson's tale. With Lysette Anthony, Stephen Tobolowsky, Harvey Fierstein, and Jeremy Piven. Written by Tim John, Oliver Butcher, William Davies, and William Osborne. (Village Theatre VII, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Embassy; through Sept. 7.)

The Innocent—Ian McEwan's 1990 novel of love and Cold War intrigue in nineteen-fifties Berlin, adapted for the screen by the author. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Isabella Rossellini, and Campbell Scott. Directed by John Schlesinger. (Village East Cinemas and Cinema II.)

Jeffrey—In adapting his hip, funny 1993 stage hit, Paul Rudnick has lost much of its charm and humor. The story of Jeffrey (Steven Weber), a gay man who decides to become celibate (because the fear of AIDS has taken all the fun out of sex) and then meets Mr. Right, seems dated, and Jeffrey whines so much that you lose patience with him. Onstage, Jeffrey's indecision played with some kick—he seemed to be hurting mainly himself—but the film, with all its tight closeups of the sad, rejected suitor, makes his actions seem mean. There are some laughs, and the excellent supporting cast (particularly Patrick Stewart and Nathan Lane) keeps its clever lines afloat. The director, Christopher Ashley, did an imaginative job staging the play, but his pacing here kills the comedy.—B.D. (Cinema 3rd Avenue, Quad Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Kids—Larry Clark's film follows some New York City teen-agers through a day and a night of largely self-destructive activity; these kids seem to be wandering in total darkness. Although the movie will undoubtedly be received as a wake-up call, a sobering report on a lost generation, what's fascinating—and unsettling—about it is Clark's unmistakable admiration for the recklessness of the young. The obsessive, ardent gaze he turns on his subjects as they stumble toward oblivion has a strangely aestheticizing effect; he can't help turning these wasted, aimless kids into icons of the beautiful and damned. Screenplay by Harmony Korine (who was nineteen when he wrote it).—T.R. (7/31/95) (Angelika Film Center, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Lord of Illusions—Clive Barker's new picture is a good attempt at genre-snatching: he's taken clichés from horror and film noir and welded them together in a supernatural detective movie. The story—about a New York investigator who becomes involved in the black-magic lives of several illusionists and California cultists—rambles along unconvincingly, with a logic that is hazy at best. But Barker's images have the thrilling creepiness of a Nine Inch Nails video. The first half of the film, which includes some gruesome mutilation, is as comically suspenseful as the gimp scene in "Pulp Fiction." Unfortunately, at a certain point the supernatural takes over; the ending is just a blast of horror effects.—B.D. (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Waverly, Lincoln Square, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Magic in the Water—On a lakeside vacation, a ten-year-old girl (Sarah Wayne), her older brother (Joshua Jackson), and their divorced, workaholic father (Mark Harmon) discover an endangered water monster, in a family comedy directed by Rick Stevenson, who co-wrote the script with Icel Dobell Massey. Also with Harley Jane Kozak. (59th Street East Cinema, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Embassy.)

Mortal Kombat—This martial-arts film, based on a video game and set to a techno beat, starts out promisingly: the actors look sinewy and primed for action, and the effects (mostly morphing) are convincing. But soon the movie falls flat under an uninspired good-versus-evil plot and pathetically simpleminded dialogue. To be fair, it tries for a tongue-in-cheek punch here and there, and, thanks to Christopher Lambert (sporting a Catherine Deneuve-like wig in the Obi-Wan Kenobi role), it lands a few. But the bulk of the movie is set in a grotto that owes much to Ray Harryhausen's stop-motion-animation isles without improving on them, and the fighting is endless. It's all paced swiftly enough—like an old kung-fu movie with a budget—but it could have used some witty dubbing. Directed by Paul Anderson.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

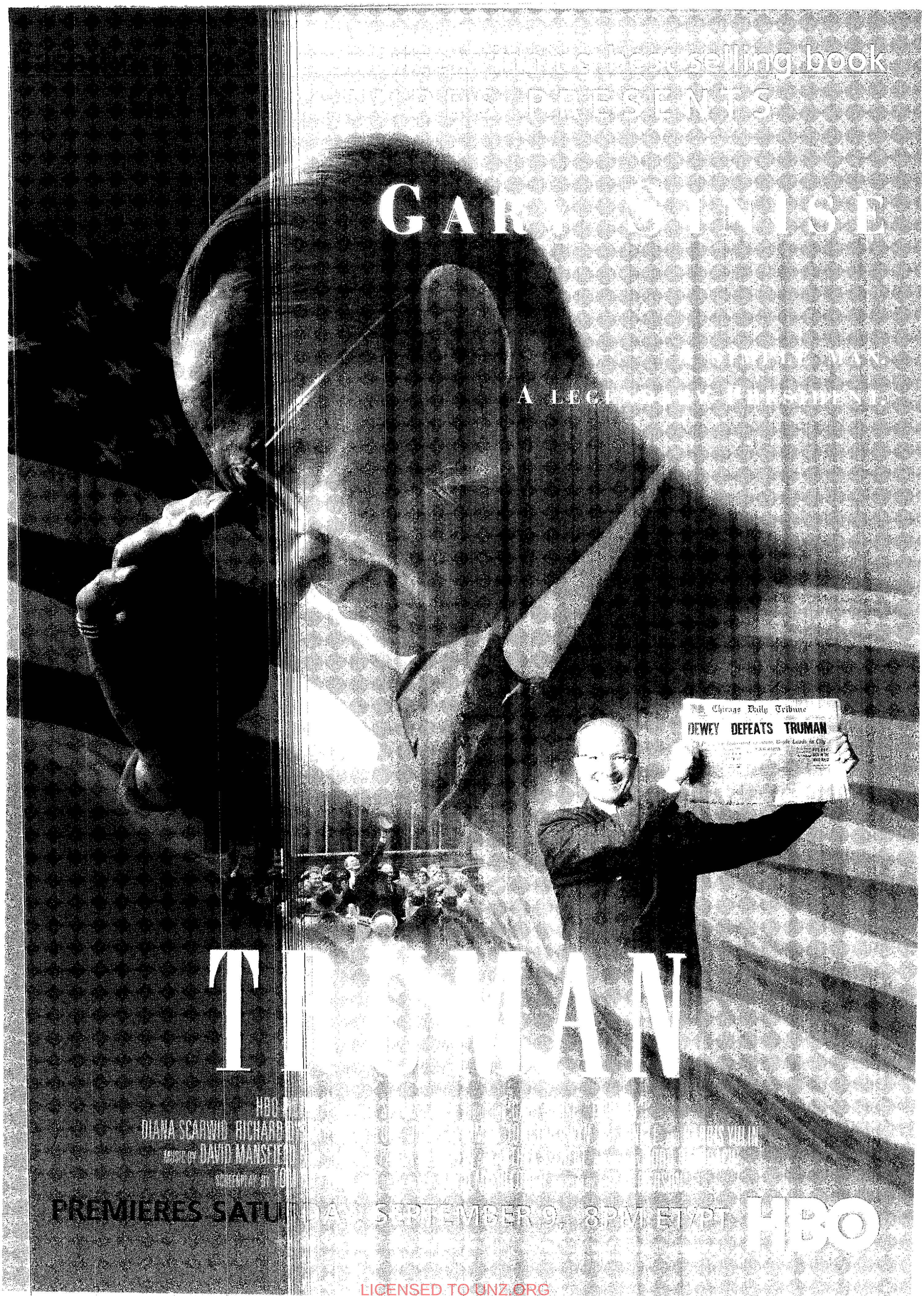
The Net—Irwin Winkler's cyber-thriller shuffles morosely from action sequence to action sequence, like a long bus trip with multiple transfers. Sandra Bullock plays a computer whiz who stumbles on evidence of a sinister conspiracy; she's pretty and likable, but this wan chase picture needs a lot more than she can give it. The screenplay, by John Brancato and Michael Ferris, is remarkably free of ingenuity, and therefore of suspense. With Jeremy Northam and Dennis Miller.—T.R. (8/7/95) (Village Theatre VII, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

The Postman—Antonio Skármeta's bittersweet 1985 novel, "Burning Patience," upon which this movie is loosely based, told the story of Mario, a lonely postman who delivers mail to Pablo Neruda in Isla Negra, the desolate corner of Chile where the poet spent his final years. In Michael Radford's lovely but sanitized version, the action has been moved two decades earlier to picturesque Italy. As Neruda, the great Philippe Noiret somehow conquers being dubbed in Spanish-accented Italian; as Mario, the late Italian comedian Massimo Troisi is painfully affecting. In Italian.—S.K. (Village East Cinemas, 68th St. Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The Prophecy—The forces of good, in the form of a policeman (Elias Koteas) and a schoolteacher (Virginia Madsen), battle the forces of evil (Christopher Walken and Viggo Mortenson) for the soul of a child. Written and directed by Gregory Widen. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

The Show—A documentary about hip-hop music, featuring concert footage of Craig Mack, Dr. Dre, Naughty by Nature, Run DMC, and other acts. Directed by Brian Robbins. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Something to Talk About—An enjoyable but thin pseudo-feminist comedy from a screenplay by Callie Khouri, who wrote "Thelma & Louise." Julia Roberts plays an insecure Southern wife and mother who leaves her husband (Dennis Quaid) when she discovers that he is having an affair. Roberts and Quaid have some funny moments together, and some warm ones. But it's hard to take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her problems too seriously: for one thing, she has an overbearing but fabulously rich family on a horse farm to run to for shelter; for another, although she starts out looking tense and wan, by the end she's wearing makeup, curling her hair, and looking so radiant that Quaid realizes he'd be a fool not to woo her back—problem solved. With Robert Duvall and Gena Rowlands as her parents. Directed by Lasse Hallstrom.—S.K. (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Unzipped—A witty and fascinating look at the fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi during the months leading up to his fall, 1994, show. Director Douglas Keeve and editor Paula Heredia capture the absurd amount of work that goes into the twenty-minute unveiling of a collection that consists largely of pink and orange fake furs. Mizrahi—warm if occasionally dictatorial—plays to the camera like a natural star. It's nice to see a behind-the-scenes documentary that isn't just out to expose warts. With Naomi Campbell, Cindy Crawford, Kate Moss, and other very familiar faces.—S.K. (Village Theatre VII, Tower East, and Lincoln Square.)

The Usual Suspects—In a season of fat blockbusters, a picture as brainy, bitter, and compact as this one comes as a shock and a treat. Five criminals, ranging from petty to pro, are herded into a police lineup on suspicion of armed robbery. They walk, but not before joining forces to plan a new crime—a bright idea that soon darkens with treachery and ends in a bulk order of dead bodies. Director Bryan Singer and screenwriter Christopher McQuarrie somehow keep from getting lost in the spiralling plot, which revels in rumors and flashbacks and the ominous feeling that they're being engineered by one man; the film is both a hunt for his identity and a game in which everyone—the good, the bad, and the audience—gets to play sucker. Singer's style may overheat now and then, but his cast, headed by Chazz Palminteri and Kevin Spacey, keeps things cool.—A.L. (8/14/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, and Lincoln Square.)

A Walk in the Clouds—Keanu Reeves plays a Second World War veteran who agrees to pose as the husband of a California vineyard owner's daughter (Aitana Sanchez-Gijon) when he learns that she is pregnant. With Giancarlo Giannini and Anthony Quinn. Directed by Alfonso Arau ("Like Water for Chocolate"). Written by Robert Mark Kamen, Mark Miller, and Harvey Weitzman. (Beekman, East 85th Street, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Waterworld—Kevin Costner plays the Mariner—part man, part fish—in a post-apocalyptic action picture of the "Mad Max" type. Lurking beneath its conventional adventure-movie surface is a bizarre environmental parable, in which Costner's rugged, ecologically correct loner battles a scurvy bunch of pirates called Smokers, who smoke cigarettes, drink Jack Daniel's, and burn fossil fuels. None of the filmmakers appear to have realized that spending a fortune to make a picture that condemns excessive consumption and preaches the wise use of resources might seem a bit disingenuous. With Jeanne Tripplehorn, Tina Majorino, and Dennis Hopper. Directed by Kevin Reynolds.—T.R. (8/7/95) (Village Theatre VII, Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, and National Twin. . . . ¶ 34th St. East; through Sept. 7.)

ALSO PLAYING

the amazing panda adventure: Village East Cinemas, Sutton, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square. . . . **arabian knight:** Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy. . . . **batman forever** (reviewed in our issue of 7/10/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **burnt by the sun** (5/8/95): Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **casper:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **clueless:** 34th Street Showplace, Waverly, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema. . . . **country life:** Angelika 57. . . . **crumb** (5/1/95): Film Forum 3. . . . **double happiness:** Cinema 3. . . . **first knight** (7/17/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **forget paris** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **french kiss** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **i can't sleep:** Quad Cinema and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **a little princess** (5/29/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **living in oblivion:** Angelika Film Center, Eastside Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **nadja:** Angelika Film Center. . . . **nine months** (7/24/95): 62nd & Broadway. . . . **priest** (3/27/95): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **smoke:** Angelika Film Center, Sutton, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **virtuosity:** Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Chelsea Cinemas, and Embassy. . . . **world and time enough:** Quad Cinema.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
Plaza, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St., between 8th and 9th Aves. (504-0960).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
Paris, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
Regency, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
Lincoln Square, B'way at 68th (336-5000).
84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
Embassy I, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
National Twin, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Belle de Jour (1967)—Luis Buñuel was in his late sixties when he made this icy, bracingly unwholesome film about the secret life of an elegant Parisian bourgeoise. Séverine (Catherine Deneuve), who is frigid with her handsome and considerate husband (Jean Sorel), spends her afternoons as a prostitute in a discreet, upscale brothel. The movie, adapted by Buñuel and Jean-Claude Carrière from a popular novel by Joseph Kessel, is a pristine example of the great filmmaker's serenely outrageous late style. In this picture, desire has a de-luxe blandness that's both mysterious and deeply, unnervingly funny. Also with Michel Piccoli, Geneviève Page, and Pierre Clementi. In French.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas and Paris.)

Dead End (1937)—The setting of Sidney Kingsley's once celebrated play is a dead-end street on the East River, where an expensive apartment house towers over the slums; the play is about the confrontations of rich and poor, and it features a gang of streetwise kids and a gangster, bred there, who comes back for a visit. The movie has the ambience of Broadway social consciousness of the thirties, which, like the beautifully engineered plot, is highly entertaining. Humphrey Bogart is the gangster, with Allen Jenkins as his sidekick, Claire Trevor as his old girlfriend who has turned whore, and Marjorie Main (before her Ma Kettle days) as his mother. The contrasting characters of the poor and honest lovers are played by Sylvia Sidney and Joel McCrea. Directed by William Wyler; screenplay by Lillian Hellman.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 10.)

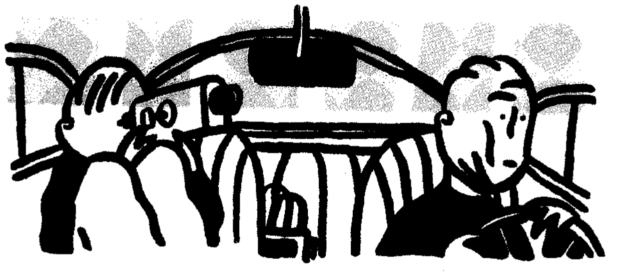
Deception *(1946)—Blissfully foolish*—a camp classic. Alex Hollenius (Claude Rains) is the greatest composer in the United States; his febrile mistress (Bette Davis) can escape him only by shooting him. Considering that he has set her up in the finest apartment in Manhattan, swaddled her in ermine, drenched her in champagne, and taught her to play the piano with a skill approximating that of Arthur Rubinstein, some might regard this as rank ingratitude. But he's a venomous genius, and he treats the cellist (Paul Henreid) whom she loves very shabbily—badgering him until he gets so nervous that he can hardly handle a bow. Irving Rapper, who had directed this trio in "Now, Voyager," let them run rampant this time, especially the leering Rains, who outdoes Davis in bravura. Erich Wolfgang Korngold did the music, with Shura Cherkassky dubbing Davis's "Appassionata."—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 9 and 11.)

Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte (1965)—Bette Davis is a rich, dotty recluse living in a moldy mansion in Louisiana; she wanders about the shadowy rooms in streaming hair and billowing nighties, whispering telepathic endearments to her long-dead daddy. Olivia de Havilland is her treacherous cousin, Agnes Moorehead the witchlike housekeeper, and Joseph Cotten the family doctor. The story, redolent of mutilation and assorted horrors, was directed by Robert Aldrich. A lot of people seemed to enjoy the spectacle of Davis crawling and howling and looking wildly repulsive.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Sept. 8-9.)

The Owl and the Pussycat (1970)—George Segal and Barbra Streisand give this romantic comedy about a self-deceiving would-be writer and a hooker a good, fast, raucous spirit. Her words come out impetuously fast and hit such surprising notes that she creates her own suspense—she's a living, talking cliff-hanger. And he supplies a steadying grace. Their energy and the director Herbert Ross's sense of pace just about overcome the principal dramatic weakness of the material—that it starts high. Ross does a fine job of helping you adjust to the subsequent changes in tone and tempo.—P.K. (A Different Light Bookstore; Sept. 10.)

Rain (1932)—Joan Crawford is the innocent-at-heart tramp Sadie Thompson in this version of the Somerset Maugham wheezer, adapted by Maxwell Anderson and directed by Lewis Milestone. Crawford is the most unnuanced actress imaginable, yet this time her desperate earnestness is fixating. As the sanctimonious Reverend Davidson, Walter Huston has some startlingly shrewd moments, but the production is stilted and claustrophobic—obviously, the dated stage version dominated the moviemakers' thinking.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 7.)

Rope (1948)—In this impressive, atypical Alfred Hitchcock movie, the brilliant homosexual thrill-killers Leopold and Loeb become Brandon (John Dall) and Philip (Farley Granger), Manhattan dandies who murder a member of their social set and dump the corpse into a chest that soon becomes the centerpiece of a dinner party. The guests include the dead man's family, fiancée, and romantic rival, as well as the unholy duo's former prep-school teacher (James Stewart), who has unwittingly inspired them by preaching Nietzsche. The action unfolds tensely in real time—the eighty minutes of the crime, the party, and the aftermath—but the movie's depth charge comes from its peculiar modern ghoulishness. Hitchcock relies on Dall's rabid intensity to energize the drama, and the actor puts on quite a show, disguising Brandon's aestheticized sadism and malice toward all with an oily solicitude. The director shot the film in intricate ten-minute takes, editing only to connect them; the camera, like Dall's Brandon, pulsates with adrenaline while icily evaluating disaster. Arthur Laurents and Hume Cronyn adapted Patrick Hamilton's 1929 play.—M.S. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 8 and 11.)



LAURENT CILLUFFO

The Strange One (1957)—Jack Garfein's version of Calder Willingham's novel "End as a Man" serves up Ben Gazzara as the most polymorphous-perverse young sadist of the year. (The competition was keen.) This psychopathology of morale in a Southern military academy is a grisly—often effective—fusion of Freud and Actors' Studio. With George Peppard, Pat Hingle, Arthur Storch, Larry Gates, Mark Richman, James Olson, Geoffrey Horne, Clifton James, and Julie Wilson. Adapted by Willingham; cinematography by Burnett Guffey; music by Kenyon Hopkins.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Sept. 10 and 12.)

Sunset Boulevard (1950)—A young scriptwriter (William Holden) turns into a driveway on Sunset Boulevard and finds himself at the decaying mansion of the once great silent star Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson). Attended by her butler (Erich von Stroheim), she lives among the mementos of her past, and plots her comeback in her own adaptation of "Salome." The rapacious old vamp persuades the young man to stay and work with her on the script; he becomes her kept man, her lover, her victim. Glint-eyed Swanson clutches at her comeback role almost as if it were Salome, yet the acting honors belong to Holden. When he makes love to the crazy, demanding old woman, his face shows a mixture of pity and guilt and nausea. This brittle satiric tribute to Hollywood's leopard-skin past is almost too clever, yet it's at its best in this cleverness, and is slightly banal in the sequences dealing with a normal girl (Nancy Olson) and modern Hollywood. Billy Wilder directed; the script is by Charles Brackett, Wilder, and D. M. Marshman, Jr.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Sept. 10-11.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Through Sept. 7: "Misery" (1990, Rob Reiner) and "Dolores Claiborne" (1995, Taylor Hackford), both with Kathy Bates. . . . ¶ Sept. 8-9: "Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte" (†) and "Lady in a Cage" (1964, Walter Grauman), with Olivia de Havilland. . . . ¶ Sept. 10-11: "Sunset Boulevard" (†) and "The Fan" (1981, Edward Bianchi), with Lauren Bacall. . . . ¶ Sept. 12: Animated films featuring Native American characters.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363)—The 1995 Festival Hong Kong; all the films are in Cantonese, with English and Chinese subtitles. Sept. 6: "He's a Woman, She's a Man" (1994, Peter Chan), with Leslie Cheung and Anita Yuen. . . . Sept. 7: "Once Upon a Time in China V" (1994, Tsui Hark), with Zhao Wen-zhou and Rosamund Kwan. . . . ¶ From Sept. 8: "Theremin—An Electronic Odyssey" (1995, Steven M. Martin).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A series of films made from Broadway plays. Sept. 7 at 2:30: "Rain" (†). . . . Sept. 7 at 6: "Winterset" (1936, Alfred Santell), with Burgess Meredith. . . . Sept. 7 at 8: "Born Yesterday" (1950, George Cukor), with Judy Holliday, William Holden, and Broderick Crawford. . . . Sept. 8 at 2:30: "Our Betters" (1933, Cukor). . . . Sept. 8 at 6 and Sept. 11 at 6: "Rope" (†). . . . Sept. 8 at 8:15 and Sept. 12 at 1: "Four Hours to Kill!" (1935, Mitchell Leisen). . . . Sept. 9 at 1 and Sept. 11 at 3:15: "Deception" (†). . . . Sept. 9 at 3:15: "Payment Deferred" (1932, Lothar Mendes), with Charles Laughton. . . . Sept. 9 at 5 and Sept. 11 at 1: "Broadway" (1929, Paul Fejos). . . . Sept. 10 at 12:45 and Sept. 12 at 5: "The Strange One" (†). . . . Sept. 10 at 3: "Outward Bound" (1930, Robert Milton), with Leslie Howard. . . . Sept. 10 at 5: "Dead End" (†). . . . Sept. 12 at 3: "Death Takes a Holiday" (1934, Leisen), with Fredric March.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—Sept. 6 at 2, 5:15, and 8:30: "The Yellow Canary" (1943, Herbert Wilcox). . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 3:45 and 7: "Till We Meet Again" (1936, Robert Florey), with Herbert Marshall. . . . ¶ A three-week program of films from Argentina; all the films are in Spanish, with English subtitles. Sept. 8 at 6:30, Sept. 9 at 8:30, and Sept. 10 at 4: "A Shadow You Soon Will Be" (1994, Hector Olivera). . . . Sept. 8 at 8:45, Sept. 9 at 6:40, and Sept. 10 at 6:10: "Nothing to Lose" (1993, Alberto Lecchi). . . . Sept. 9 at 4 and Sept. 10 at 8: "Gatica the Monkey" (1993, Leonardo Favio). . . . Sept. 11 at 2 and 6:15 and Sept. 12 at 4:15: "Dark River" (1952, Hugo del Carril). . . . Sept. 11 at 4 and 8:10 and Sept. 12 at 2: "Rag Ball" (1949, Leopoldo Torre Rios). . . . ¶ Weekend showings for children. Sept. 10 at 2: "The Circus" (1928, Charlie Chaplin; silent), with Chaplin.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—A program of short films featuring the Three Stooges. Through Sept. 8 at 1 and 2:30: "Dizzy Doctors" (1937), "Dizzy Detectives" (1943), and "From Nurse to Worse" (1940). . . . ¶ Sept. 9 at 5: "Crush" (1992, Alison Maclean). . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 2: "Heavy" (1995, James Mangold). . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 5: "Safe" (1995, Todd Haynes).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Sept. 10 at 7, the feature will be "The Owl and the Pussycat" (†).

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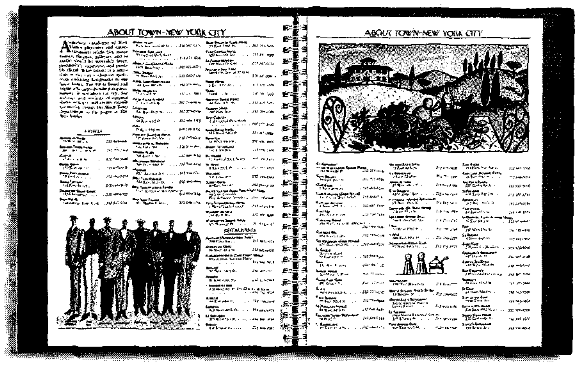
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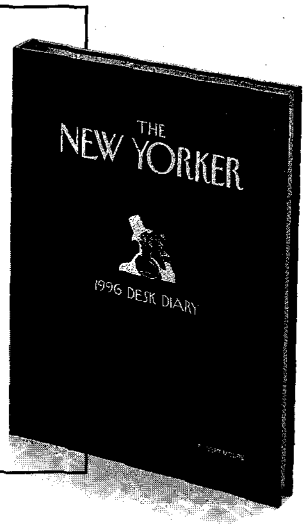
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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

A BOSNIAN DIASPORA IN ASTORIA

Of the millions of refugees who have fled the decimated regions of the former Yugoslavia, a few have managed to arrive in our midst, here in the city. Most have stories like that of Ibrahim and Adaleta Koristovic, Muslim siblings who fled Sarajevo in 1992, amid the first grenade bursts and sniper fire of the siege. Like the Koristovics, who are nineteen and twenty, most of the refugees here are young and alone—their parents are dead, missing, or still trapped in one of the remaining "safe areas" of Bosnia. News reports from home detail an endless and unbearable flow of casualties—last week's mortar attack near a Sarajevo marketplace, for example, killed at least thirty-seven—and reinforce the refugees' most profound fear: that their sense of isolation may be permanent.

The American government, which has done so little to help the Bosnian Muslims protect themselves, now seems to be turning a cold shoulder even on the refugees who have managed to make it here safely; Ibrahim and Adaleta, who applied for political asylum three years ago, still haven't had a preliminary interview. Without asylum, the refugees' status remains in bureaucratic limbo. They scrape by in a way painfully reminiscent of their lives in Sarajevo.

Ibrahim and Adaleta live in Astoria, Queens. They share a one-bedroom apartment with their grandmother, and sleep alongside her, in bunk beds. The most reliable news the two heard of their parents came in January, in response to an ad they had placed in a Bosnian newspaper. "I was forced to leave my apartment and I was deported to Kula . . . where I met your father, and he said his wife Nadza was also there," a stranger wrote. "I don't know if he got out or not." Though grateful for the news, the Koristovics were hardly relieved: Kula is a Serb-run prison.

The Koristovics' apartment has become a meeting place for Bosnian refugees, not simply because they have been here longer than the others but also because they are exceedingly warm, decent people, possessing an infectious, if inexplicable, cheer. On a recent Sunday night, about a dozen friends, all from Sarajevo, came over, and they spent the evening around an electric piano, singing traditional Bosnian ballads. When they spoke, they often interrupted themselves in midsentence to sing out a few sad bars, as if by reflex.

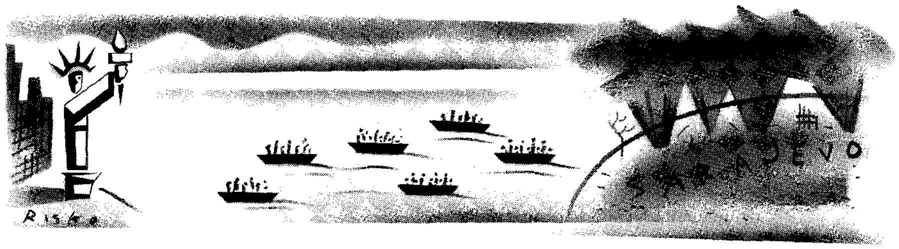
There was Nina, who is twenty-two, and Edin, her younger brother by two years, who came to the United States last year. Nina had a scholarship to Upsala College, and an American family agreed to help them financially. Upsala went bust and the family's sponsorship ended, so Nina and Edin were left to their own devices. Now Nina babysits, off the books, to support them both.

There was Lelo, Nina's boyfriend, who had just arrived after three years as a soldier in the Bosnian Army. His face ashen, his eyes wide, he walked about the apartment like a phantom. Lelo has directed his friends not to ask him about the fighting, so while the group laughed at a videotape he had made of two other soldiers goofing off—playing with machine guns, pretending to hold class in the rubble of a bombed-out university building—he and Nina convened solemnly in the hallway, holding hands.

There were others—Jasmina, Olja, and the only Serb, Ozren—all of whom have overcome so much, and whose struggles could be alleviated to some degree by a grant of asylum. How ironic, then, that Congress, which unsuccessfully attempted to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian Army, now seems eager to embrace an insidious bill—called the Immigration in the National Interest Act, drafted by Representative Lamar Smith, of Texas—that would severely restrict grants of political asylum.

Still, such matters seemed far from the minds of those gathered at the Koristovics'. It was late now, and the singing and the laughter—at Ibrahim's drawing of the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic as a vampire, for example—gave way to a contented, natural calm. Soon there were hugs and goodbyes, and the refugees wandered out into their new diaspora.

"We were depressed tonight," Adaleta said apologetically, sitting down on a sofa that had been salvaged from a Dumpster. "Last night, we were out until three in the morning. We were with a friend who had just arrived from Sarajevo. He used to play guitar in a band, but in the war he had part of his arm blown off, here." She



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT RISKO

drew an imaginary line across her forearm. "So last night he took out a roll of Scotch Tape and put the pick on his arm, and he played the guitar like that. I was crying.

"I hate being depressed," Adaleta continued. "But sometimes we'll look at each other like this"—she assumed a bewildered expression—"and we'll give each other a hug and just say, 'What are we doing here? How did this happen?' "

"PRIVATE EYE" SORES

Lin Cook

THE late British comedian Peter Cook can do no wrong in the English press, but his widow, Lin Cook, who inherited forty per cent of the satirical magazine *Private Eye* (her husband owned sixty-six per cent), seems to be able to do no right. Until now, Lin Cook, who is Malaysian Chinese, has never spoken to the press, and even as she took her seat at an Italian restaurant in Hampstead she seemed tentative—unsure of whether to sit in the front or the back, to talk on the record or off. Almost immediately after her husband's death, in January of this year, at the age of fifty-seven, the modest, convent-educated, publicity-shy Lin—who married Cook in November of 1989—fell afoul of the British press, which can never see a foreign belt without hitting below it. She was cut to the familiar racist outline of wily Oriental.

The first low blow came in a report in the *Daily Telegraph* that at Peter Cook's funeral there weren't "any flowers," even though his widow says she had provided roses for the coffin. The *Evening Standard* referred to her "gimlet stare," while the *Guardian* printed her photograph and described her as "shareholder in waiting." Lin Cook found these remarks "very cruel, to say the least." The subsequent news that Peter Cook's two younger sisters would split his remaining twenty-six per cent of the *Private Eye* stock was greeted with glee in some quarters, as if the Yellow Peril had been beaten back by plucky Brits. "So farewell, Lin Chong"—her maiden name—"to any ideas that you have gained control of [*Private Eye*]. You have not," the *Observer* wrote. Finally, Lin Cook, dubbed Lady Gnome by the press—a sobriquet that invoked the comic moniker of the magazine's fictitious proprietor, Lord Gnome—emerged full-blown in the Sunday *Times* as a kind of subversive agent working to undermine a pillar of the English establishment. "LADY GNOME STIRS FEARS AT THE EYE" was the headline, and the story said that "Lin Chong . . . has already made several visits to the 34-year-old organ and has examined the company's accounts. She has been seen huddled over the books with her brother, an accountant, sending a frisson of apprehension through staff." At the time, Lin Cook says, she had examined no books, had not been accompanied by her brother, and had made just three visits to the *Private Eye* offices, to work on the program for her husband's memorial service. "The accusation is total rubbish," she says of the Sunday *Times* article. "All I was concentrating on was producing a perfect memorial service for Peter. I was certainly not there with my brother, huddled over the accounts." (The Sunday *Times* stands by its story.) She goes on, "I have never been involved in *Private Eye;* I would not begin to know how to be involved. So there's no question of my wanting to take over the *Eye* and change things. Why would I? Why should I?" What Lin Cook does want is an income from *Private Eye*, and her brother, an accountant based in Geneva, is currently negotiating for that with the magazine.

As for *Private Eye*, which takes a back seat to no English publication when it comes to racial slurs, a sign bearing the magazine's name in Chinese letters was hung in an office window this summer. Lin Cook called up to ask about the sign. It was a joke, the editors explained. The sign is still there.

THE LATEST IN RADICAL PIQUE

WHEN Stanley Cohen talks, you can tell that what he likes is not so much arguing as convincing. Every sentence of his has the ring of the self-evident. *Of course*, directed violence is a valid extension of self-defense under certain political circumstances. *Yes*, the media are controlled by a handful of right-wing barons. *Naturally*, the criminal-justice system puts the downtrodden at a disadvantage.

If Cohen manages somehow to make all this sound charming, it's because he is a radical political lawyer, and convincing is both his job and his passion. Cohen's latest, and most notorious, client is Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, the head of the political bureau of the militant Islamic organization Hamas, who is currently being held at the Metropolitan Correctional Center. The Israeli government blames Abu Marzook for helping to organize a string of terrorist attacks in the Middle East, and in October it is scheduled to present its case for his extradition to Israel. Cohen, who is a young-looking forty-one, got the case as the result of a phone call in late July instructing him to go to the M.C.C. and meet with Abu Marzook, who had just been detained at Kennedy International Airport upon returning from the Middle East. "I introduced myself and said, 'I'm your lawyer,' " Cohen says. Abu Marzook gave Cohen the once-over—beard, ponytail, earring—and looked mildly horrified. "But I had been given two code words, so I said them, and he said, 'Ah!' " Cohen recalls, smiling hugely. Throwing his arms wide, he mimics Abu Marzook's hearty Arabic greeting: "*Salaam aleikum!*"

Stanley Cohen

IF Stanley Cohen is not as well known as fellow-members of the radical bar, like William Kunstler or Lynne Stewart, it's not for lack of credentials. At Legal Aid in the Bronx from 1983 to 1989, he worked on, among other things, the defense of Larry Davis, who in 1986 shot his way out of a confrontation with police and was eventually acquitted of all serious charges. In private practice, Cohen was indicted in 1990 in Canada for riot, obstruction of justice, and possession of weapons, for his role as a negotiator on behalf of Mohawk Indians when a dispute over a sacred burial ground escalated into an armed confrontation with Canadian authorities. (The charges were later dismissed.) More recently, there's the case of the East Thirteenth Street squatters, the occupants of four buildings in the East Village who are fighting to keep the city from evicting them. Cohen spent much of the summer arguing their quixotic cause in court—and in the media. "It's given me a chance to jump at the beast again in a very public way," Cohen says. "A chance to go after people who are mean-spirited and corrupt and arrogant and completely removed from accountability." This sort of talk does not endear one to the powers that be, or to their lawyers. Cohen's opponent in the squatter case, for example, is the Assistant Corporation Counsel, Terryl Sellers, whom Cohen loudly called "a lying sack of shit" in one out-of-court confrontation.

In the Abu Marzook case, Cohen hasn't really had time to infuriate anybody, but he has received death threats, and for a while had police officers checking I.D.s of visitors to his office. Cohen seems especially happy when his visitors—he works out of a walkup on Avenue D, the one with "Attorney" scrawled by the buzzer—include members of the press. "All the Israeli press wants to know is how a Jew can represent a head of Hamas," Cohen says. "I ask them, 'How can a Jew *not* represent a head of Hamas?' " On a recent morning, Cohen heard from the media again. A wire-service reporter wanted a comment on potential links between Abu Marzook and a bomb scare at J.F.K. Cohen pointed out that Hamas has never been formally accused of terrorist actions outside Israel and the occupied territories. And, besides, his client is merely the head of the political wing of Hamas, and thus is not linked to any of the violence allegedly committed by renegade cells. "My new way of putting it," Cohen says, "is that he is the Gerry Adams of Hamas—a political leader *only*." The next day, the *Times* used exactly the same comparison, without attributing it to Cohen—another small victory in the court of public opinion.

THE PLAYER

Gardnar Mulloy, tournament-tennis player incarnate at eighty-one—he is six feet one, thin, and trim, walks with the spectacularly balanced gait of a confident athlete, and has a thick mane of white hair—came up from his Miami home last week to the U.S. Open to start things off on Opening Day with the traditional hitting, together with Bill Talbert and Frank Parker (still only in their seventies), of tennis balls from the Stadium Court net to the spectators. The trio had been selected in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of their respective 1945 titles: Parker for the men's singles, and Talbert and Mulloy for the men's doubles. Mulloy aimed his shots directly at the nattily-dressed-to-the-teeth United States Tennis Association chums and guests seated in wicker chairs in the President's Box, and one was caught. "Bravo! Bravo!"

Moments later, Mulloy, the most nattily dressed of all—in maroon trousers and navy blazer—settled into a wicker chair of his own in the box. As a hundred-and-three-time winner, he has more U.S.T.A. National Championship golden balls than any other tennis competitor in history. Mulloy watched some of the first match and later adjourned for a splendid lunch hosted by the U.S.T.A. in the President's Dining Room. Then, trailed closely by Bunny Smith—a skinny, smiling woman in a white warmup suit, who has tennis-classic short, straight, sun-bleached hair and a Florida lifetime tan and who has worked as Mulloy's teaching assistant for twenty-five years—he grabbed a President's Box courtesy ice-cream pop and said he was going to mosey around.

"I want to run into some contemporaries," he said. "I want to set up a game."

"Got a court?" Bunny Smith asked. "Can you get a court here?"

"They've got no Men's Eighties scheduled," Mulloy said grumpily. "They've got Men's Over Forties. That's it." He took a large, angry bite of his pop.

"What was your last National Championship win?" Bunny Smith asked.

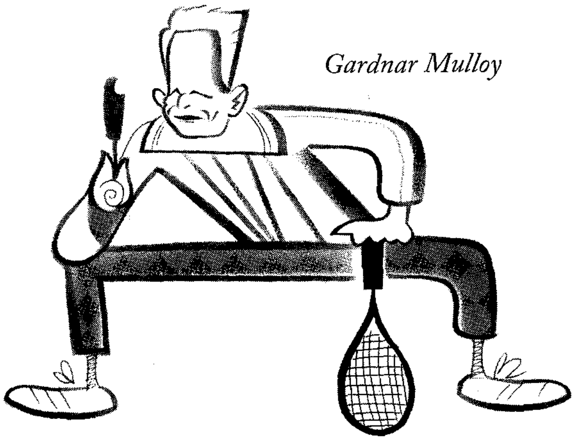
"National Men's Eighties Indoors, last May, in Boise, Idaho," Mulloy said quickly but still grumpily.

"Right," Bunny Smith said. "And you won both the singles and the doubles. A sweep."

Mulloy stopped moseying as he heard his name being called: "Gar! Oh, my gosh! Gar Mul-*loy!*"

A veteranish woman supervising a table of umpires advanced on Mulloy and embraced him while he held his ice-cream pop up high, out of harm's way. Then she stood back and stared at him lovingly.

"My gosh, you look great," she said. "It's not the same now, Gar. We had camaraderie in those days. Cama*rad*erie. Now it's all about money. Big money. Are you playing?"



Gardnar Mulloy

"No courts. No Over Eighties matches," Mulloy said. He finished his pop and gave the stick an unhappy toss into a trash can.

"And he's got to get ready for the Eighties and Over at Newport in two weeks," Bunny Smith said.

As Mulloy moved along, past the commercial stalls lining the paths to the other courts, the red-headed, cheerful, and now somewhat baggy and battered Australian champion Fred Stolle stopped Mulloy and congratulated him on his morning performance of ball-hitting. "You hit the ball the farthest," Stolle said as the two players eyed each other with ironic smiles.

"Are you playing?" Mulloy asked.

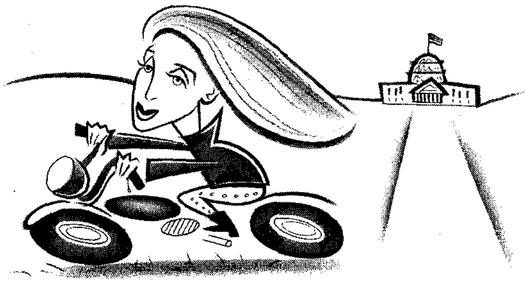
"Next week, with the Over Forty blokes," Stolle said. "What about you?"

"I'm going back to my hotel right now, and I'm calling up Ham Richardson to play with me at his club in Manhattan," Mulloy said with a wry grin. "I've got to *play*."

MARY FISHER'S GRAVE ART

Washington, D.C., isn't known for its cutting-edge culture. The city telegraphs restraint and a weary, dutiful interest in the arts—a spirit captured perfectly in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building, home to exhibitions that, in accordance with Senate rules, must be "educational, cultural, and commemorative." ("Scenic Alaska"; "Women in Action"; "Lyme Disease.") Yet in three weeks, to the surprise of everyone but three senators, a large coffin painted red, blue, gold, and white and covered with a collage of dire AIDS headlines will find its way into the rotunda.

The coffin, part of an exhibition called "Messages," is not the work of an ACT-UP agitator but is, rather, the creation of Mary Fisher, the well-connected Republican mother of two who turned AIDS activist three summers ago at the G.O.P. Convention. Fisher, who is forty-seven and H.I.V.-positive, has set aside her usual floral paper sculptures and her line of placemats and napkins for darker pursuits. Now she creates podiums and folding screens covered with images of her sons and caregivers and with obituaries of friends.



Mary Fisher

"Some of my friends saw the coffin and thought I was building it for myself," Fisher said the other day. She lives on an estate in suburban Maryland, and she was standing in her studio there, her hair wet from a recent shower and her demeanor relaxed from a four-hour ride on her Yamaha Virago motorcycle. No, the coffin is not for her. And its message, she says—as carefully as any elected official might—isn't political. "I don't see death as political," she explained. "Or AIDS, or any illness, really. I just put out what was in my soul."

Fisher is a master of tone, of knowing how to deliver an unvarnished revelation, but gently. Since her speech at the Convention, she has given some three hundred others and has published two books, with a third slated for this winter. She's famous in political circles for her upbeat, inspirational exhortations on AIDS and for her extraordinary social agility—which she hopes will pay off this week, when invitations go out for a private reception to celebrate her exhibition. An impressive list of senators and representatives are lending their names to the event, including Bob Dole. But do they know what awaits them in the rotunda?

"I had to send some photographs of the work to the Senate Rules Committee," Fisher said.

Photographs of the coffin, too?

"It didn't exist at the time."

THE great truth is, you can get almost anything accomplished in Washington with the right strong arms supporting you. Fisher would concede that being the daughter of Max Fisher, the Detroit industrialist who happens to be Dole's honorary finance chairman, helped her land the rotunda. Other artists have AIDS, and many with more esteemed artistic reputations have produced work related to the disease, yet they don't get shows there. "A lot of artists aren't particularly connected to politicians," Fisher said. "You do have to be sponsored by senators."

It was Fisher's good friends Orrin Hatch, Ted Kennedy, and Nancy Kassebaum who sponsored her show and eased the coffin's way past the Rules Committee. Fisher says she hopes they'll all be there for its unveiling. The coffin measures six feet by two by two and a half. Its lid is closed, and will remain so. Down on one side, a newspaper headline is glued to the surface. It reads, "MARY FISHER SEES CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

FIESTA

ALL summer long, on Sundays at around 8 P.M. the Volvos and Range Rovers glide down the Henry Hudson Parkway from Dutchess, Litchfield, or Berkshire County, sweep under the George Washington Bridge, and then, briefly, tangle up near the exit at 158th Street. As traffic slows, those in the passenger seats get a glimpse of a small slice of Riverside Park—a parking lot, really—where a party is in full swing: a flash of lights, a snatch of a Spanish lyric, a woman laughing in the close heat of a summer night, a young man sitting on the guard rail who tilts a bottle of beer back and drinks deep. And then the driver hits the gas.

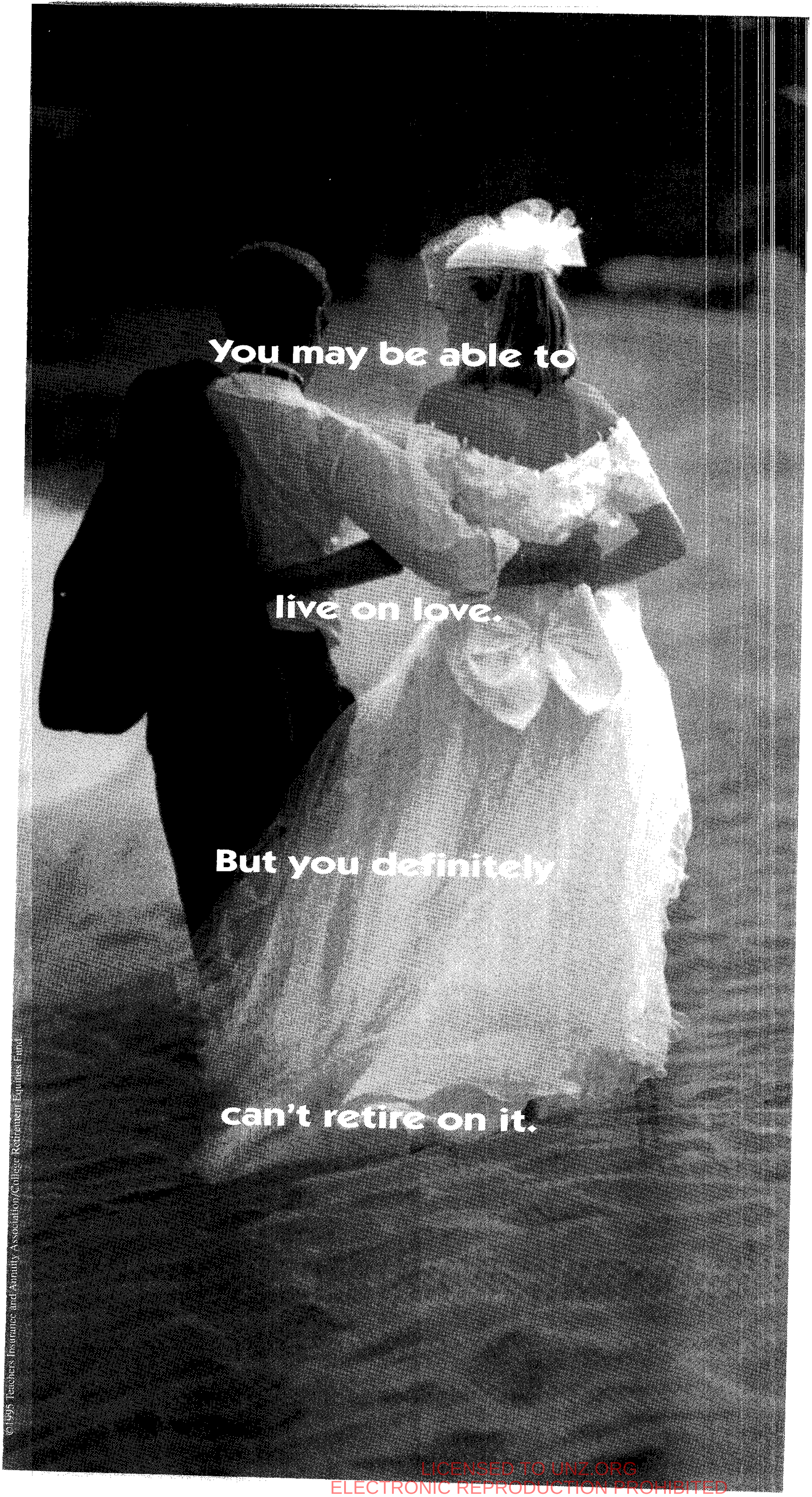
Those at the party—most of them originally from the Dominican Republic—have driven over, too, but from counties named Hudson and Bronx, or from upper Manhattan. Nobody exactly organizes the Sunday parties; they just happen, starting in midafternoon, when ballplayers take the fields overlooking the river. On this particular Sunday, Veronica Mena and her friends have come down from the Grand Concourse and staked out a piece of ground on the highway embankment. Why party practically on the highway's shoulder? "It's too crowded down there," says Veronica, a round-faced young woman, pointing toward the scene below: cars triple- and quadruple-parked; tables filled with dominoes players; knots of women in short shorts pretending not to notice men in baggy, knee-skimming ones; impromptu refreshment stands selling barbecued chicken legs, shish kebab, and corn on the cob; giant stereo systems masquerading as automobiles with trunks and hoods lifted symmetrically, the better to conduct the music skyward.

Veronica has stationed herself near a black minivan with large speakers and with blue-white-and-red Dominican flags sprouting from every inch of its surface. A Jeep Wrangler floods the night with pure noise. Strolling through the park, partyers move in and out of the cars' spheres of influence, their cadence adjusting to the changing beat—salsa, merengue, salsa again. And then, at one glorious moment, it seems that everyone has spontaneously cued up the Dominican hit of the summer—"El Venao," by Santo Domingo's own Ramón Orlando.

"Everybody's relaxed, they drink, nobody fights" is how Veronica explains the attractions of the parking-lot party. One young man jumps in, in Spanish, and Veronica translates: "He's saying it's like the Dominican Republic. There was a place there, on El Malecón, where you could park the cars and the water was right there." El Malecón is the famous waterfront promenade of the Dominican capital. "At George Washington—yeah, we have an *avenida* called George Washington—by the river, that's where we used to go."

"It feels like that here," the young man concludes. "Like a little bit of the Dominican Republic. Like this is ours." ◆

This week's contributors: Warren St. John, John Lahr, Rob Walker, Lillian Ross, Martha Sherrill, Amy Virshup.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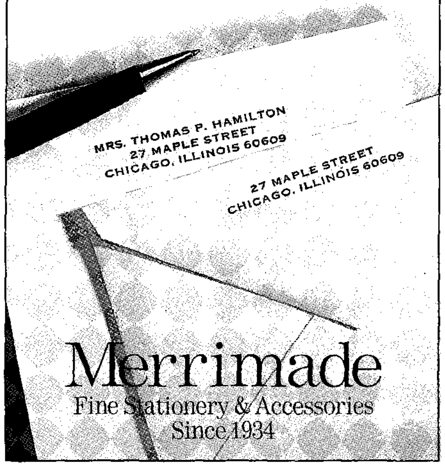

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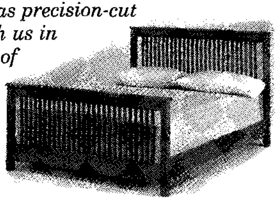

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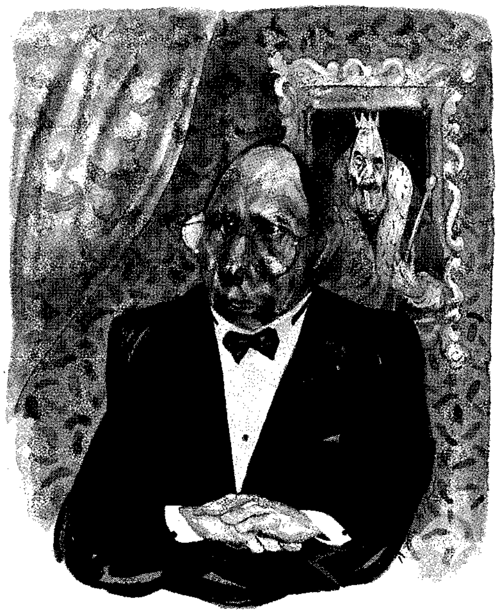
THE POLITICAL SCENE

THE BOSS

Bob Dole wants the G.O.P. nomination so badly that he has turned to Alfonse D'Amato to help him get it, and D'Amato may turn to his mysterious guru.

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

EVERY time Bob Dole has risen he has fallen, a pattern as regular as the tides. In 1971, he was made chairman of the Republican National Committee by Richard Nixon, but in 1973 he was humiliated when he was replaced by a blander figure, George Bush. (Nixon's memo ordering the change was succinct: "Dole—he must go. Image.") In 1976, Dole was named by Gerald Ford as his running mate, but when Dole exposed his bitterness and vindictiveness he became a liability, and was blamed by many Republicans for the ticket's narrow loss. In 1980, Dole ran for President, and as the Party's most recent Vice-Presidential nominee he had the claim of primogeniture, but he finished near the bottom of the heap in New Hampshire, receiving fewer than a thousand votes. In 1988, he again ran for President, and his pollster told him he was sure to be the nominee. But Dole's complacency exposed his jugular to Bush's fierce negative attack. "Stop lying about my record," Dole snarled on the night that Bush's victory in New Hampshire fatally wounded the Dole campaign. This was more than a complaint; it was a primal scream.



D'Amato isn't just useful to Dole; as the putative deliverer of New York's delegates, he is necessary.

STEVE BRODNER

"Dole is desperate to win," one of his friends said recently. Returned as Majority Leader of the Senate, Dole can again assert that his rightful turn has come—that he has earned the nomination by being the last survivor of his political generation. This year, Dole expected to triumph easily in the Iowa straw poll on August 19th, but barely managed a first-place tie with his nemesis, Senator Phil Gramm, who claimed a victory. The straw poll was as phony as Rambo's courage—anyone, Iowan or not, who paid twenty-five dollars could vote in it—but it created an impression of vulnerability for Dole, and two days later he tumbled sixteen points among Iowa Republicans, to thirty-six per cent, according to the Iowa Project-1996 Poll. Once again, Dole has been thrown back onto his anxieties. He is leaving nothing to chance, filling political space with machinery, organizing every state to be delivered from the top down and the inside out. The rush of endorsements reinforces his message: Bob Dole will be nominated. Inevitability has become his larger rationale; the size of his juggernaut is a testament to his fear of defeat.

Of all the Republican officeholders who have pledged their fealty to Dole, not one plays a more critical role than Senator Alfonse D'Amato. No other political figure backing Dole dominates so thoroughly a state so large and so strategic. D'Amato's emergence as a Republican power unequalled in New York since the titanic Nelson Rockefeller ruled from Albany took decades of plotting to achieve. The brutish method that D'Amato mastered during his rise—a Borgia-like elimination of rivals—is now being applied on behalf of the man he playfully calls Dolie.

Before Alfonse D'Amato conducted the first round of hearings on the Whitewater affair, last year, Bob Dole gave him a bottle of perfume labelled "White Water"—a token of Dole's expectation that D'Amato's services to him might sometimes be malodorous. The role of heavy is one that Dole understands, having performed it himself for Nixon and Ford. But keeping the Whitewater affair afloat may be the least of D'Amato's efforts on behalf of his leader's ambition. D'Amato is no mere henchman, as Dole was in the seventies. Dole could bring no independent power to bear; his status as factotum to Presidents allowed them to use or discard him at will. D'Amato, however, exercises formidable power in his own right. He is not simply useful to Dole; as the putative deliverer of New York's convention delegates, he is necessary.

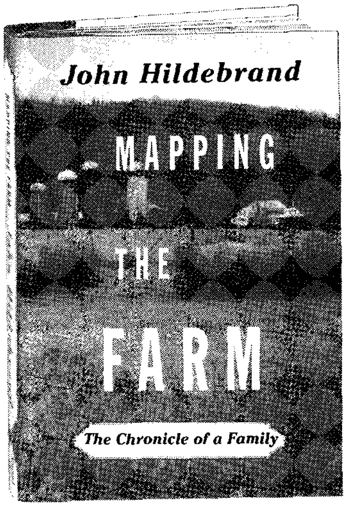
"Dole remembers people by their failures," a Republican consultant who is working with the Dole campaign remarked to me. "He constantly tells the story that his 1988 pollster told him he would win New Hampshire. Mention a name to Dole and he'll say, 'He lost me that state.' " After each defeat, he returns with a mostly new crew. "He doesn't have back the people who lost," the politico said. "It's quirky with Dole. He has the look of a guy who feels he's being called onstage to have someone pull the trapdoor lever. He's certain—*certain*—that something will go wrong. Reagan looked happier getting shot than Bob Dole will look getting nominated."

Dole's constant anxiety that it could all come unstuck has set the dynamics of his campaign in motion. His managers are assiduously framing their plans in anticipation of worst-case scenarios: that someone might discover a hitherto undetected way to surge against Dole early; that Phil Gramm might catch fire in the South; that Pete Wilson will hold California's delegates—a fifth of the total needed to nominate—and thereby enable the other candidates to cobble together enough small percentages of delegates to stop Dole at the Convention. Against this vision of Dole's culminating humiliation stands the power of D'Amato.

That power seemed to descend on D'Amato all in one night—Election Night, 1994. He had not run for reelection himself that year, but he was celebrating a victorious campaign season. A year earlier, he had boasted to Republican senators, "I'll give you one test. I'm going to take out Mario Cuomo." Now, in a suite at the Hilton Hotel, at the side of his handpicked candidate for governor of New York, George Pataki, D'Amato received the news that the Republicans had won the Senate, and he would therefore become the chairman of the Banking Committee, which is to say the overseer of Wall Street. The Senator's former aides had staffed all the significant positions in Pataki's campaign and, if he won, would be appointed to run his administration; nearly twenty thousand state jobs would abruptly fall under D'Amato's sway. When Rupert Murdoch wished to congratulate the winner, he called D'Amato, and the Senator passed his cellular phone to Pataki. "It's Rupert," he told him.

Back in Washington, a month later, D'Amato's colleagues unanimously elected him chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, giving him control over dozens of operatives, over scores of lucrative contracts for consultants, and over millions of dollars in campaign funds. Now he was the conduit between Republicans and Wall Street in a double capacity. At a gathering of four hundred cheering Washington corporate lobbyists, Bob Dole introduced the new N.R.S.C. and Banking Committee chairman, and told them that D'Amato would soon be dunning them for contributions.

This past March, Dole had another announcement to make: D'Amato would be the chairman of his Presidential-campaign steering committee. At a press conference, D'Amato mustered the entire Republican congressional delegation from New York and every Republican county chairman (at the direction of the state Party chairman, William Powers, who used to run D'Amato's upstate office) to announce their monolithic support for Dole's Presidential nomination. Dole, in turn, hailed D'Amato as "King Alfonse." The following month, D'Amato sponsored a dinner for Dole at the



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Waldorf-Astoria, where he raised a million two hundred thousand dollars.

TWO basic motives guide D'Amato's political actions. The overriding one is self-interest. His true ideology is getting—for himself and for those with whom he exchanges favors; the notion of the public interest is an abstraction invented by silk-stocking snobs to exploit credulity. Although D'Amato denies any wrongdoing, his ethics troubles have stemmed from the favors he extends: arranging publicly financed housing for relatives and friends; lobbying for defense contracts for big contributors such as Wedtech; burying an effort to limit S. & L. purchases of junk bonds after being given a thousand-dollar-a-plate dinner by Drexel Burnham Lambert, the No. 1 junk-bond underwriter. D'Amato's second motive is vengeance, the outstanding example being his war against his former protégé Rudolph Giuliani. In 1983, D'Amato arranged for Giuliani to be appointed United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, but then Giuliani ignored D'Amato's requests to reduce the sentence of the Mafia loan shark Mario Gigante and to drop some of the charges against the Gambino crime-family capo, Paul Castellano, who was gunned down during his trial in 1985. From that point on, the friendship betwen Giuliani and D'Amato deteriorated.

D'Amato is not among Dole's close friends in the Senate, and he has only recently been inducted into Dole's leadership circle. Their curious partnership is the product of something they both have a taste for: expediency. Dole, according to his associates, feels some distaste for D'Amato's slapstick antics, but he never expresses it publicly. In Dole's court, D'Amato is not a mere jester; he is also a powerful duke. Dole respects D'Amato for taking control of New York as Dole has taken control of Kansas—a difficult feat for a senator, and especially hard in sprawling, bare-knuckled New York. In the Senate, in the first move of the Republican-nomination struggle, D'Amato and Dole moved to deprive Phil Gramm of a seat on the Finance Committee, and D'Amato took the seat for himself. But, most important, D'Amato is applying the maxim that all politics is local—and applying it, characteristically, with a vengeance. His plan is to control New York so tightly that Dole's campaigning here will wind up being superfluous—a goodwill tour. Dole's advisers use a variety of metaphors in speaking about New York: "a lock," "a door," "a fire wall." The primary comes after the Southern and Midwestern contests and before the battle moves west. "If Dole wins New York, the door slams shut," said Warren Rudman, the former senator from New Hampshire, who is a senior adviser to Dole. "Here sits Alfonse atop the heap."

In 1988, D'Amato was the chief of Dole's Presidential campaign in New York, and the Bush campaign here, chaired by Guy Molinari, the Staten Island borough president, successfully blocked Dole from getting on the statewide ballot. Dole ended up dropping out before he ever got to New York, but in Dole's defeat D'Amato learned lessons not only about Dole's fragility but also about the uses of ballot-access laws. New York's election laws are an arcane maze designed to be employed by organizational haves to keep organizational have-nots off the ballot. To qualify to win the maximum number of delegates in the Republican Presidential primary, a candidate must collect twelve hundred and fifty legible and valid signatures in each of the state's thirty-one congressional districts—and must collect all of them during the month preceding the filing deadline, which, for next year, is January 4th. It is all but certain that under D'Amato's direction only one candidate will appear on the Republican-primary ballot next year. "It's almost impossible for somebody else to come in at this point and make an appreciable dent in the outcome," Guy Molinari, now a Dole supporter, said of the 1996 primary. "It's money in the bank. That's the rules of the game."

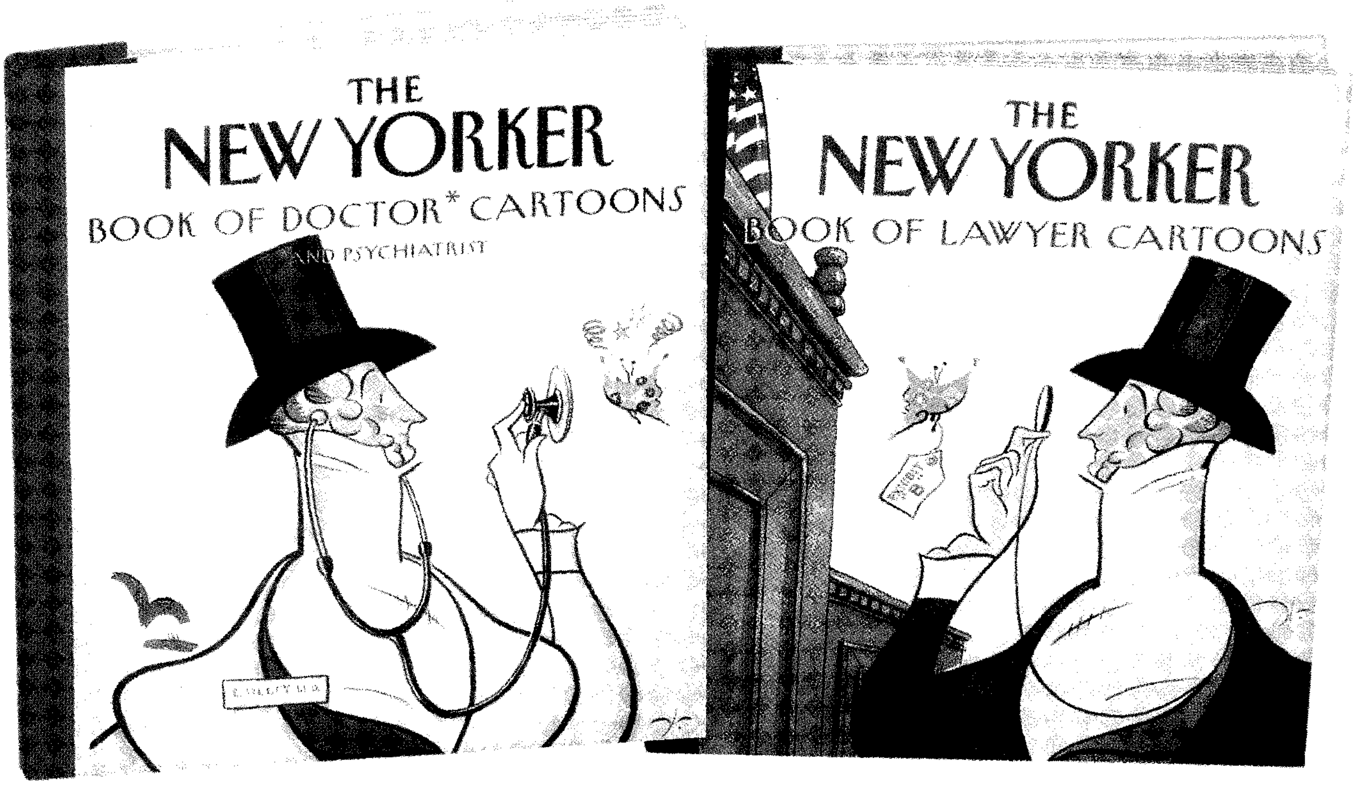
The Dole campaign initially considered taking the calculated risk of opening the New York primary, at the urging of a Republican adviser with experience in Presidential politics. But D'Amato firmly vetoed that course, according to the adviser. Thus, eight months before the event the New York Republican primary is virtually sewn up. "The primary's over," Mario Cuomo told me. "It's barbaric politics. Of course, if they can get away with it, most political organizations will do what these Republicans have done."

In March, at a press conference with Dole, D'Amato was asked if he would scrutinize ballot petitions filed by other Republican Presidential candidates.

"Well," D'Amato replied, "we, you know, we've suffered both sides of that—1988. Let me say this to you: it's an open state."

Dole laughed.

EVEN as D'Amato imposes his fiat, the New York boss himself is being guided by a mysterious guru-cum-pollster named Arthur Finkelstein. At



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every peril, Finkelstein has led him to safety, and D'Amato's faith in Finkelstein's political divinations is described by those who have observed this shrouded relationship as approaching the religious. If D'Amato is the answer to Dole's insecurity, Finkelstein has been the answer to D'Amato's.

The photo agencies stock no pictures of Arthur Finkelstein, but Republican associates describe him as a white male, five feet ten inches tall, balding, and slightly overweight. He is from a blue-collar family in Brooklyn and has a thick outer-borough accent. He currently lives in Ipswich, Massachusetts, and has an office in Irvington, New York. The databases do not disclose his age, but he is estimated to be in his early fifties. He grants no interviews. He is described by those who know him as reclusive, secretive, and dictatorial. He is apparently given to throwing tantrums. "Arthur is always pissed off," said a Republican consultant who has worked closely with him.

The ascendancy of Finkelstein's jagged-edge suburban politics has paralleled—and has contributed to—the decline of the old Republican establishment. Finkelstein has made his mark by turning resentment and hostility into political themes. As early as 1970 he was exploiting the social fears of the lower middle class—whom he dubbed "peripheral urban ethnics"—and fashioning a right-wing populism pitting "us" against "them." Among other issues, he construes taxes as a mechanism by which an élitist-liberal "they" exploit a hardworking "us" to support a welfare-cheating "them." Within the small universe of G.O.P. operatives, Finkelstein is known for his zeal in deploying the roughest emotional language and issues to gain an advantage. A Republican consultant who has worked with him said, "Arthur finds a media-savvy method of keeping his client visible in ways everyone else would consider beneath them." His current clients include three Republican senators besides D'Amato: William Roth, of Delaware; Robert Smith, of New Hampshire; and Connie Mack, of Florida. Against Mack's 1988 Democratic opponent, Buddy McKay, Finkelstein used the slogan "Hey, Buddy, you're liberal."

Finkelstein began his career by producing radio shows for Ayn Rand, the purist ideologue of rugged individualism. In 1970, Finkelstein tried to persuade William F. Buckley, Jr., to run for the Senate from New York; instead, he wound up directing the campaign of Buckley's brother James, and James Buckley was elected on the Conservative Party line against a Democrat, Richard Ottinger, and the incumbent liberal Republican, Charles Goodell. In the bruising primaries of 1976 between Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford, Finkelstein worked for Reagan. His notable contribution was to help develop the idea that Ford was betraying national security by "giving away" the Panama Canal—an issue that lifted Reagan dramatically after his defeat in New Hampshire.

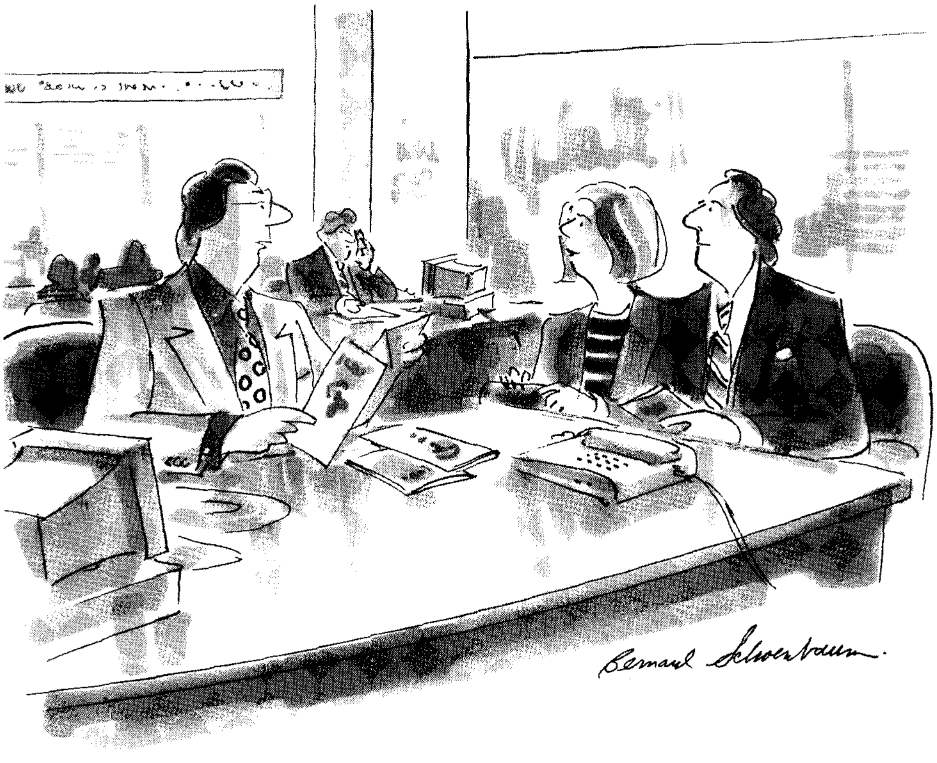
Beginning in the early seventies, Finkelstein was on retainer to take polls for Joe Margiotta, the chairman of the Nassau County Republican Party. When Rockefeller departed the scene, the largest remaining force in the New York State Party was the cash-rich Nassau County machine. At the time, it dispensed about thirty thousand county jobs as patronage, obligating those employees to kick back one per cent of their salaries to the political organization. Nassau, a suburban fiefdom populated by a middle class in flight from the city, became Finkelstein's political laboratory. Through the machine, Finkelstein met an ambitious young politician who had spent his career in its service—Alfonse D'Amato. After graduating from Syracuse Law School in 1961, D'Amato had got his first job, as a law clerk in his home town, Island Park, through his father's political connections. Over the next seventeen years, D'Amato rose from law clerk to Island Park executive, then to receiver of taxes, and then to Hempstead town supervisor. In 1979, he demanded that Margiotta support him for the United States Senate seat that would be contested the following year.

Margiotta took D'Amato for a séance with the exiled Richard Nixon, and Nixon pronounced his chances "very good"—his form of a blessing. But Finkelstein informed him that his chances were poor, and took charge. He arranged for a meeting with J. Daniel Mahoney, the leader of the state Conservative Party, and D'Amato was endorsed over a potential primary rival; his right flank was secure. Then Finkelstein devised a television commercial aimed at the incumbent, the venerable liberal Republican Jacob Javits: "And now, at age seventy-six, and in failing health, he wants six more years." With that, D'Amato won the primary. But Javits, whose pride had been gravely injured, would not let go: he gained the Liberal Party endorsement and split the vote that would have gone to the Democratic candidate, Elizabeth Holtzman. Javits's vanity enabled his tormentor, who got forty-five per cent of the vote, to be elected.

D'Amato was considered, even by his Republican colleagues, to be a one-term fluke. But in 1986, outspending his Democratic opponent, the commentator and consumer advocate Mark Green, by a margin of thirteen to one, he had an easy win, choreographed by Finkelstein. In 1992, D'Amato, far behind in the polls, appeared headed for defeat. But his opponent was Robert Abrams, the state Attorney General, who ceded the moral high ground to D'Amato by calling him a fascist—a political affront that D'Amato and Finkelstein alchemized into an ethnic slur. In D'Amato's television commercials, designed by Finkelstein, a sneering voice-over delivered the coup de grâce: "Bob Abrams. Hopelessly liberal." D'Amato won by one point.

Not all of Finkelstein's advice is politically shrewd. He is renowned among Republican politicos for brilliant but usually bizarre, and sometimes counterproductive, tactics. It was he who, in 1988, came up with the idea that D'Amato, Giuliani, and Benjamin Baer, chairman of the Federal Parole Commission, should dress up as crack buyers on an undercover drug bust—a widely ridiculed stunt that took the three men years to live down. The props that D'Amato drags onto the Senate floor—including the taxosaurus, a toy dinosaur that D'Amato triumphantly stabbed with a pencil during last year's budget debate—are also reported to be Finkelstein's work.

After his 1992 victory, D'Amato set his sights on controlling the greatest center of power in the state: the governorship. He even told Democrats in Washington that he himself would run against Mario Cuomo, "out of vengeance." As reported by Leonard Lurie in his book "Senator Pothole," D'Amato added, "I want to torment him." D'Amato's associates can't pinpoint the exact cause of his vindictiveness. And Cuomo himself is perplexed. For years, the two men had what amounted to a non-aggression pact, even when D'Amato came under attack, as happened regularly, for alleged corruption. "I defended him more vigorously than Republicans did when he was first accused," Cuomo told me. "I don't



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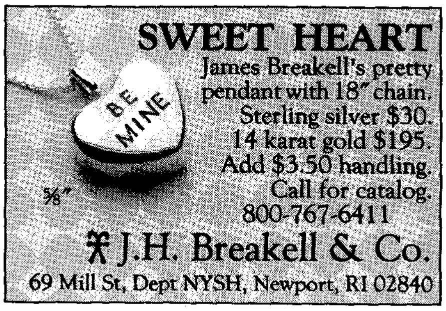

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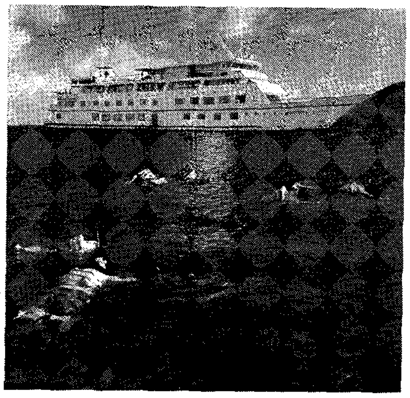

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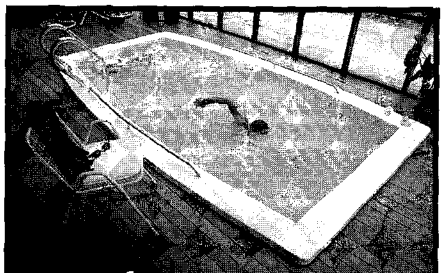

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regret it. What I said was that he was not a thief. I hoped the presumption of innocence would be confirmed, because he's my senator, I work with him, he's an Italian-American—for a whole lot of reasons. I want him to be innocent of all things. After that, what happened? I'm not sure. Maybe he saw a poll and Finkelstein told him he could beat me."

When George Pataki, the mayor of Peekskill, first approached D'Amato seeking his endorsement, the Senator brushed him aside. He was trying to recruit Frank Zarb, the chairman of Smith Barney, to make the run. But Zarb turned down D'Amato's offer. Then D'Amato had Finkelstein take a poll, and the poll showed that Pataki's qualities made him potentially more appealing than anyone else in the field. Besides, he was amenable to D'Amato's direction. D'Amato's press secretary, Zenia Mucha, was inserted in the campaign as Pataki's press secretary; D'Amato's fundraiser, Charles Gargano, as Pataki's; D'Amato's campaign manager, Kieran Mahoney, as Pataki's; and Finkelstein as Finkelstein. Finkelstein's anti-Cuomo slogan, a variation on his tested theme, ran in ad after ad: "Too liberal for too long."

According to one Republican politico, D'Amato makes unsolicited calls to Republican candidates across the country to urge them to hire Finkelstein. Senator Larry Pressler, of South Dakota, recently dropped his longtime pollster in favor of Finkelstein. In the first half of this year, thanks to D'Amato, the N.R.S.C. paid Finkelstein ninety-five thousand dollars in fees. And D'Amato went so far as to attempt to make Finkelstein the strategist for the Dole campaign. Dole, of course, has had an aversion to pollsters ever since the 1988 New Hampshire primary, and he is said to dislike Finkelstein in particular.

Dole's managers were adamantly opposed to bringing in Finkelstein in any capacity, for they saw that doing so would diminish them. So they devised a shrewd alternative: they hired a Finkelstein protégé, Kieran Mahoney, as senior consultant to the Dole campaign. Mahoney is a former D'Amato aide. He managed D'Amato's last two races, and he is the son of J. Daniel Mahoney, the former state chairman of the Conservative Party, who engineered its endorsement of D'Amato in 1980 and, on D'Amato's recommendation, was appointed a federal district judge.

D'Amato took the deal. Now, according to another senator who attends the weekly strategy meetings of senators who support Dole, D'Amato has lately been stressing that Dole, "who's very reluctant to have people program him," needs to "solidify" his message. "D'Amato is praying for the day when he can insert Finkelstein into Dole's brain," a Dole campaign adviser told me.

The panic touched off by the setback in the Iowa straw poll has only strengthened D'Amato's position within the Dole campaign. The prospect of D'Amato's promised delivery of New York's delegates—on time and neatly packaged—is more than ever an anchor against the unpredictable storms of press and voter opinion. And failure elsewhere in the campaign makes D'Amato's competence stand out in sharper relief. "D'Amato has a hook to criticize others internally in the Dole operation," a Dole adviser said.

Still, if Dole's inevitability crumbles, D'Amato may reveal his unsentimental side. A Republican politico who has been at the center of several Presidential campaigns and is a friend of Dole's observed, "If D'Amato thinks the Great Egg is about to fall, he'll waste no time in recognizing it. It may look strange to a lot of people, but it will be the fastest getaway." Even if Dole becomes the standard-bearer, he may be tainted by what appears, at the moment, to be his certain triumph in New York. Since he has no rivals on the ballot here, his nomination may appear to be an ill-gotten gain. For the time being, though, the more vigorously D'Amato advances Dole's ambition, the more thorough becomes D'Amato's domination of New York. And the more Dole stumbles, the more dependent he becomes on D'Amato. The incorrigible political animal from the middle-class suburbs of Long Island—"a man of his demographics," as a former aide put it—has become the new personification of the Republican establishment. ♦

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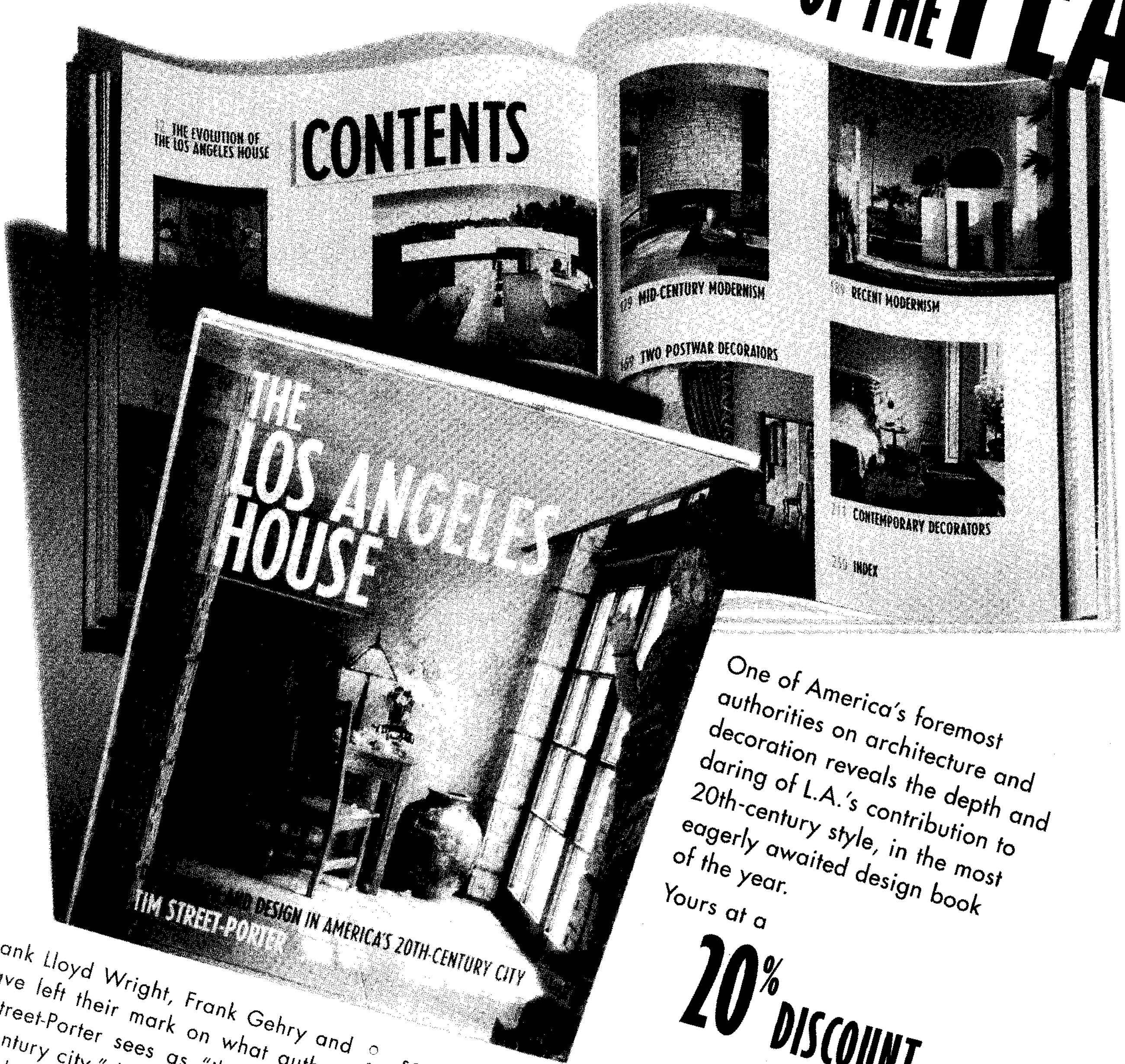

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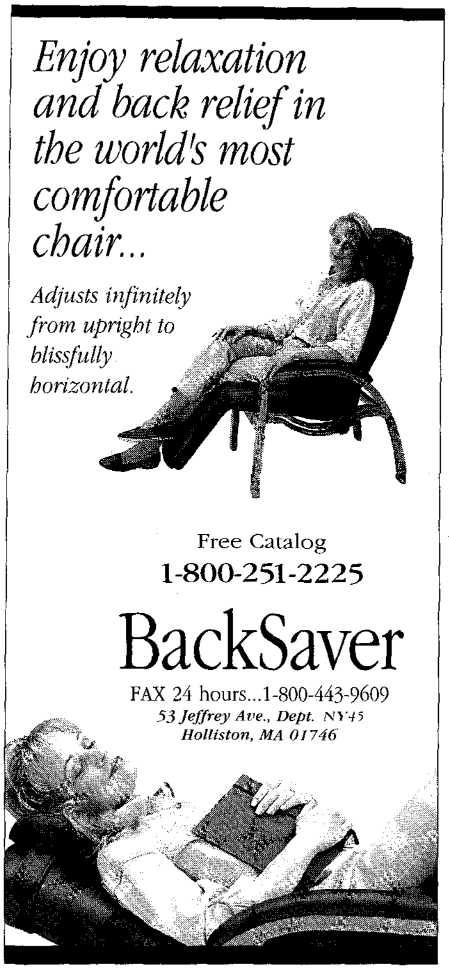
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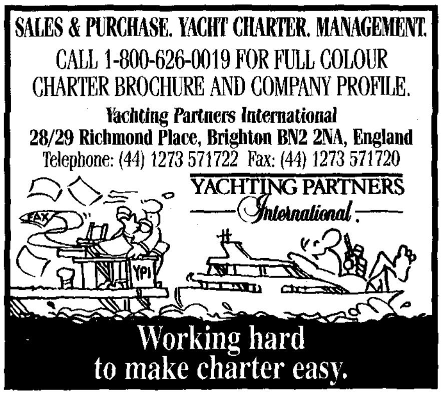
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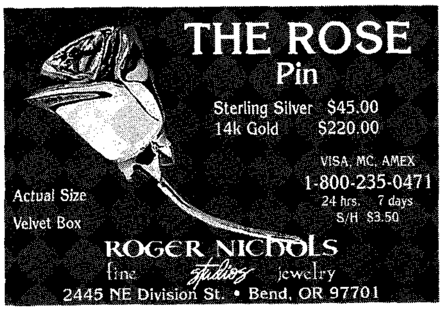
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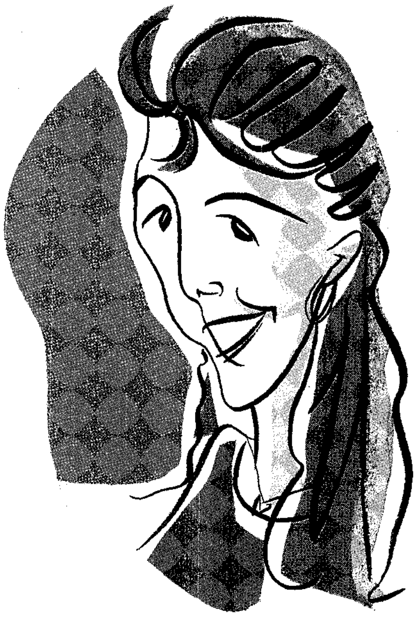
HER TOWN

Since Heather Heaton came to Millerton, it's been a one-woman story.

BY SUSAN ORLEAN

A DAY begins in the village of Millerton, New York. A man pauses while shaving and says to his wife, "I think I will run for mayor." Down the road, a cow expires mysteriously. A shopkeeper in town has labor pains. The corn begins to tassel, earlier than usual. The agenda for the village zoning-board meeting is copied, collated, stapled, and stacked. A family, over breakfast, decides to give up farming and sell its land. A mutt gives birth to ten puppies and then abandons them. Someone makes the high-school honor roll. A lawsuit is filed. A guy dies. A barn burns. A car skids. These kinds of things get reported in the town's weekly newspaper, the Millerton *News*. A woman cracks her husband over the head with an inexpensive piece of pottery. This will probably not be reported in the Millerton *News*, unless she kills him. If she does, it will indeed be big news in Millerton, and big news in the Millerton *News*—bigger than some recent stories like "TEENS UNINJURED WHEN CAR CATCHES FIRE AT INTERSECTION" and "RASHES RUNNING RAMPANT DURING BAD IVY SEASON" and "KENNETH HANLEY NAMED JIFFY LUBE MANAGER," but less enduring than the Pet Parade (a photo spread of adoptable pets, which runs in every issue of the paper) or the local crime blotter (every issue) or the Seniors Menu at the community center (most issues) or the list of the new books at the library (anytime any new ones come).



Read all about it: In Millerton, Heather Heaton is front-page news.

The village of Millerton is two hours north of New York City, in the town of Northeast, in the northeast corner of Dutchess County, and is set in the middle of slumpy hills and wavy alfalfa fields and pastureland as soft and rumpled as someone's lap. The houses in the village are solid and modest. Many of them have gardens blooming with fat, old-fashioned, costume-jewelry flowers, like dahlias and peonies and mums. In the village, you can sometimes pick up Manhattan radio stations, but you can also shop on the honor system for tomatoes and honey and patty-pan squash that people leave on stands out in their yards. About nine hundred people live in the village and about two thousand more in the surrounding area. They are dairy farmers, prison guards, antique dealers, schoolteachers, organic-vegetable growers, mechanics, store owners. Overwhelmingly, they are Republican. Once, a woman visiting in town gave birth ahead of schedule, and the baby grew up to be the famous Chicago White Sox second baseman Eddie Collins, whose major-league career began in 1906, but other than being the accidental birthplace of a Hall of Famer the village has never rocked the outside world. On the other hand, the people of Millerton have given birth, argued, voted, married, grown things, built things, burned things, and died often enough to fill their own newspaper for the past hundred years.

TOM BACHTELL

The reporting staff of the Millerton *News* has usually consisted of one person. The front page of each week's edition features seven or eight stories and two or three photographs. Each story has a byline, and each photograph has a credit. The front page of the June 15th edition carried these stories:

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS
LEARN ABOUT DIVERSITY
by Heather Heaton

MORE ANSWERS NEEDED
ABOUT ASSESSOR'S JOB
by Heather Heaton

EGG ROLLS, BAGELS
COMING TO RR PLAZA
by Heather Heaton

FESTIVAL WAS JUST THE BERRIES!
by Heather Heaton

WEBUTUCK BOARD ADDRESSES
CONCERNS RAISED AT WORKSHOP
by Heather Heaton

DOC BARTLETT REMEMBERED
AS 'ALL-ROUND GOOD MAN'
by Heather Heaton

FUNDS STILL NEEDED
FOR FIELD REPAIR
by Heather Heaton

There were also three photographs: one of second graders dressed as leprechauns and fairies; one of a fake thermometer indicating how much money had been raised so far to restore the town's Eddie Collins Memorial Park ballfields; and one of little kids eating strawberries and ice cream at the Strawberry Festival in the nearby town of Amenia. The shots of the second graders and of the Strawberry Festival were credited to Heather Heaton. This meant that there were nine mentions of Heather Heaton on the front page of the paper—the Millerton equivalent of having your picture appear on the Sony JumboTron in Times Square. I have been a reader of the Millerton *News* for several years, and that day, somewhere between the berry-festival story and the obituary for Doc Bartlett, I realized that the big news was that someone named Heather Heaton had just become the incarnation of the Millerton *News*.

Recently, I went to Millerton to spend a week with Heather. It was the thick of summer, just after the raspberry season and just as the sweet corn had started to ripen, shortly after the local American Legion post's chicken barbecue and not long before Millerton Days, the annual town celebration, which was dedicated this year to Eddie Collins. I'd thought it might be a week of dog days, but Heather told me that all sorts of things were going on: the elementary-school principal, Steve O'Connell, had resigned unexpectedly; the Millerton Gun Club was testing a new trapshooting machine; McGruff the Crime Dog was going to visit the village swimming pool; a local man had been killed by a train on the railroad tracks south of town; a cold front was about to collide with a warm front and create a gigantic thunderstorm; the author of a book about ponies was coming to speak at Oblong Books & Music, on Main Street; a woman whose family had been dairy farming in Millerton for three generations was submitting a request for rezoning so she could turn part of the farm into a gravel mine; and executive sessions of the village government would continue to be held downstairs in the town hall rather than upstairs, because one of the commissioners had a sore hip. Also, the village clerk had just quit, and the mayor, who owns an accounting practice in town, was refusing to comment on it. Unexpected things would probably happen, too. I've spent many summer weekends near Millerton, and it had always struck me as a tiny, quiet place, but knowing that all these things were happening made it seem to swell and expand like one of those pop-up sponges.

BY now, almost everyone in Millerton knows what Heather Heaton looks like, because anyone who appears on Main Street more than a couple of times gets noticed by almost everyone else in town. Heather is leggy, lean, and a little pigeon-toed, and she has a peachy complexion, a scatter of freckles across her nose, and fine brown hair with loose, loopy curls, which she wears pulled back from her face. When she blushes, which is often, she blushes from above her eyebrows all the way down the front of her neck. Her gaze is mild and disarming, and her voice is wobbly and sweet, like

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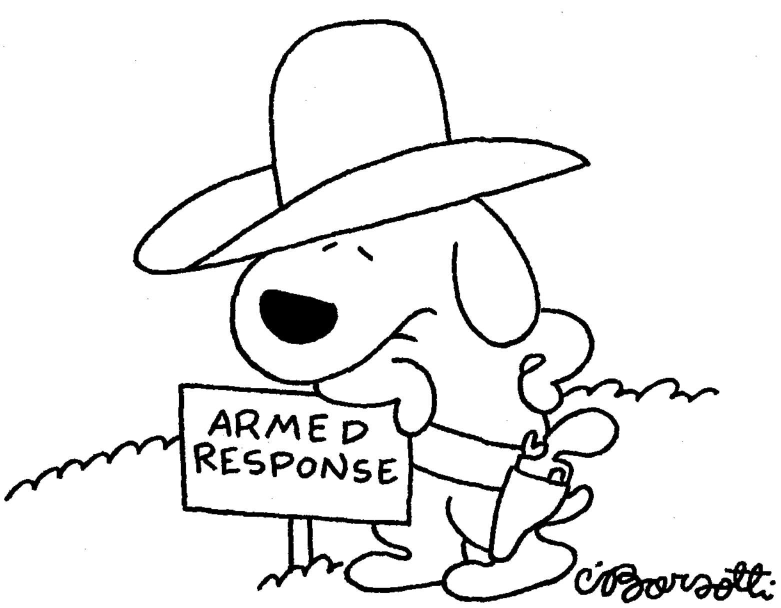
Tweety Pie's. The day I met her, she was wearing a long flowered jumper and a cotton top and a pair of beige sling-back sandals. The next day, she wore a pair of cutoff sweatpants and a T-shirt. The day after that, she wore a blouse and a dotted skirt, and after work that day she was going to be fitted for a firefighter's uniform, because she *serves as a volunteer on the squad in* Canaan, Connecticut, the town where she lives.

Heather is twenty-two years old. She grew up in Amherst, New Hampshire, which is not much bigger than Millerton, and graduated this May from the University of Connecticut, in Storrs, where she majored in journalism. She had interned at the Hartford *Courant* and had imagined that she would work for a big daily after finishing college, but then one of her professors told her about the opening at the Millerton *News*. She had never been to Millerton until the day she came to be interviewed for the job. She started work in early June. The first few nights, she went back to a room she rents in a farmhouse in Canaan and felt like crying. Since then, she has fallen in love with one of the other Canaan volunteer firefighters, has met a good proportion of the people in Millerton, and has written about sixty front-page stories for the *News*. Her "EGG ROLLS, BAGELS COMING TO RR PLAZA" article is framed and displayed on the counter at the Bagel Café. Heather still hopes to work on a big-city daily someday, but she's afraid she may be spoiled by all the exposure she's getting on the front page of the Millerton *News*. In the meantime, she's getting settled in Millerton. Once, while we were talking in her office, I could hear the rasping of an emergency-services scanner in the background, and I asked her what was being reported. "Bee sting in Staatsburg," she said. "But I wasn't really listening. After all, it's *not my town*."

THE Millerton *News* used to have its offices on Main Street in Millerton. In 1972, the owner of the Lakeville *Journal*, a weekly in Lakeville, Connecticut, which is just a few miles to the east, bought the Millerton *News*. The two papers are now like Siamese twins: they share an office in Lakeville, and their dozen or so inside pages are virtually the same mixture of community announcements, columns, service articles, church news, and advertisements for tractor dealerships, horse farms, and plant nurseries, but the front pages are different, depending on which town the papers are being distributed to.

Though Lakeville and Millerton are only four miles apart, they are not much alike. Lakeville is rich and sleek and full of summer houses; Millerton is more of a working town. They are connected by Route 44: it is Main Street in Lakeville and then Main Street again in Millerton, and, in between, it is a sharp-curved two-lane country road with a view to the north of a huge dairy farm. After the road crosses the Connecticut–New York state line, it passes the Millerton Burger King, a car wash, a fancy



restaurant called the New Yorker, and a house that Heather pointed out to me because the woman who lives there displays a collection of dolls on her lawn; Heather said she plans to write a story about her someday.

On the first day of my week with Heather, we drove from Lakeville past the dairy farm and the doll lady's house and into Millerton. Heather has a big brown beater of a Pontiac with bumper stickers lauding her college soccer team. As she drove, Heather told me she had decided against living in Millerton because she wanted to volunteer on the fire and rescue squads wherever she lived, and she felt that if she were on the Millerton squads she wouldn't be able to write about them objectively. Living in the town you cover has its perils. Once, there was a Millerton *News* reporter who lived in the village, and his girlfriend came to visit him, bringing along her pet six-foot-long python. During the visit, the snake got loose and wiggled its way into the walls of the house where the reporter was renting a room, and his landlady became loud and hysterical until the snake was found. The incident gave rise to some local discussion. Not long afterward, the reporter quit and left town.

In Millerton, we stopped to buy out-of-town newspapers at Terni's, a fishing-tackle/newspapers/camping-goods/candy store on Main Street. The day before, Millerton had celebrated Phil Terni Clean-Up Day, in honor of the store's owner, who is famous in town for sweeping up around his store every morning. Heather had subsequently written a front-page feature about the event and had taken a picture of Phil to accompany it. Phil was behind the soda fountain when we went in. The store's counter is made of cool marble, and the wood of the cabinets is old and silky. Years ago, when Millerton still had a milk-processing plant, the farmers would bring their milk cans to town every morning, drop them off, and then head for Terni's to get cigars and newspapers before they went back to their farms. Now the milk-processing plant has been converted into an apartment building, and some of the grandchildren of the dairy farmers work at Hipotronics, a small electronics plant that is just outside the town, beside fields of sweet corn and hay. "Nice ar-

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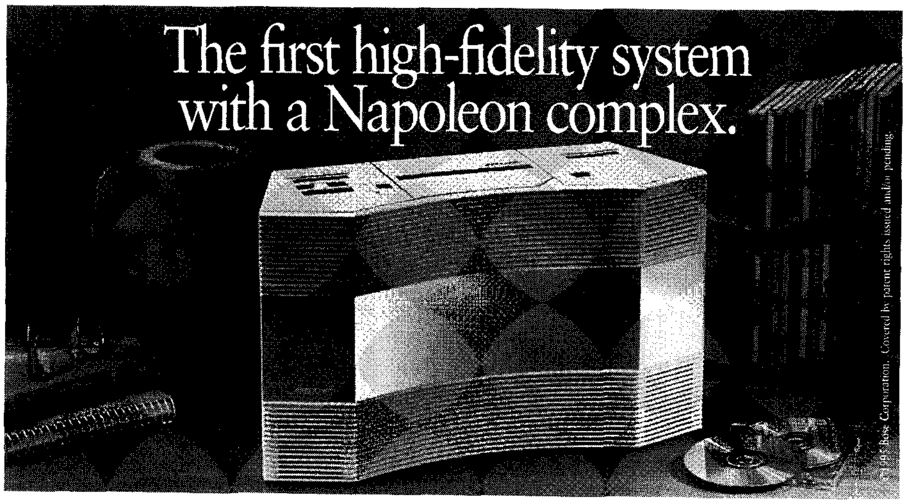
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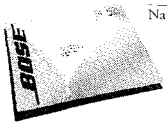

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—KAY RYAN

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ticle, Heather," Phil said. "You know, you wrote every single article in that paper."

"I know," she said. "I'm supposed to. Hey, I hope you sold a lot of them."

"Sold out," he said. "I'll order more today."

A few doors down from Terni's is Oblong Books. One of the owners of Oblong, Holly Nelson, is the head of the town planning board. Up the street is an appliance store called Campbell & Keeler; Heather planned to call Jimmy Campbell, one of the owners, about a story she was going to write on the dangers of lightning. Campbell was also one of the organizers behind Millerton Days, so she'd be in touch with him about that, too. Heather told me that not long after she started reporting in Millerton, she called a village board member named Glen White, and then called a schoolteacher named Glen White, and was about to call someone named Glen White about a third story when she realized that there weren't three men named Glen White—there was one Glen White who was involved in three different things. To some people, this state of affairs is what makes a small town seem monotonous, but to others it is what makes a place seem anchored and secure, even as it bumps around and changes. In small towns like Millerton, the same people pop up over and over in slightly different positions, but they always stay tied to the same deep place, like buoys.

THE WEEK begins at the Millerton *News* on Thursdays, when Heather and the staff of the Lakeville *Journal*—Charlotte Reid, Marsden Epworth, and Tim Fitzmaurice—meet with David Parker and Kathryn Boughton, the editor and managing editor of both papers, to talk about their stories for the upcoming issue. That Thursday, Heather told David she was working on the O'Connell resignation, the Scoland Farm gravel-mine hearing, and the story about safety precautions during electrical storms. She also said that she was hoping to borrow a cache of Eddie Collins photographs for a pre-Millerton Days feature, but added that the local man who had most of the Collins memorabilia didn't seem eager to lend the photographs to the paper. She said she'd keep trying.

"Great," David said. "What else?"

"Well, as soon as I get enough information, I want to do that big story about how Dutchess County is changing."

"Your 'dying farmers' story?" Kathryn Boughton asked.

"I changed the description of it on my list," Heather said, glancing up at Kathryn. "I didn't actually mean 'dying farmers.' I meant 'dying farms.' "

Over the next few days, Heather and I drove from Lakeville to Millerton, to Amenia, and back to Millerton, to the elementary school, to the Gun Club, to Terni's for the papers, to the sheriff's substation in Amenia for the weekly crime report, back to Lakeville, back to Millerton, to the Burger King for lunch, to the town hall, to the village hall, around the fields and the farms, back and forth through the center of Millerton—around the bend in the road where the low, flat-front buildings of the village huddle—and to the ends of town, where the buildings thin out and finally disappear. Covering a town keeps you busy. At the elementary school, Steve O'Connell was packing to leave. The school is perched on a bald gray hill, and in the summer stillness it felt a little forlorn. Steve was in a great mood because of his new job, in Westchester County. "I read the description of your new school," Heather said to him. "It sounds like a country club."

"Well, it's gorgeous," he said. "It's gorgeous, Heather. I'll tell you all about it, because I know you're not from New York. I know I'm talking fast, but that's the kind of guy I am." At the end of the interview, Heather took half a dozen pictures, because she suspected that the story would end up as her lead.

The next stop was the village pool, to cover McGruff the Crime Dog's presentation. Angela White, who is married to Glen White and is the Millerton recreation director, was waiting, with an unhappy look on her face. "I spoke to McGruff this morning, Heather," she said. "He cancelled. He said it was so hot yesterday that he almost passed out. I thought there was a fan in his costume, but I guess I was thinking of Smokey Bear." She said he had promised to reschedule, but meanwhile there would be no "MCGRUFF COMES TO TELL HOW TO PREVENT CRIME"—at least, not until the following week.

"I think I'll just take pictures of the kids swimming," Heather said. "The only trouble is, I have a lot of pictures of cute little kids this week."

The days had a jerky rhythm. After the cancelled McGruff appearance was a stop at the town hall to get information on the Scoland Farm rezoning. It was a local tale without whimsy: an old farm, a fire that destroyed barns and silos, a son killed in a car accident, a family belt-tightening, a petition to mine gravel from dairy land. We went to the pig races at the agricultural fair, in

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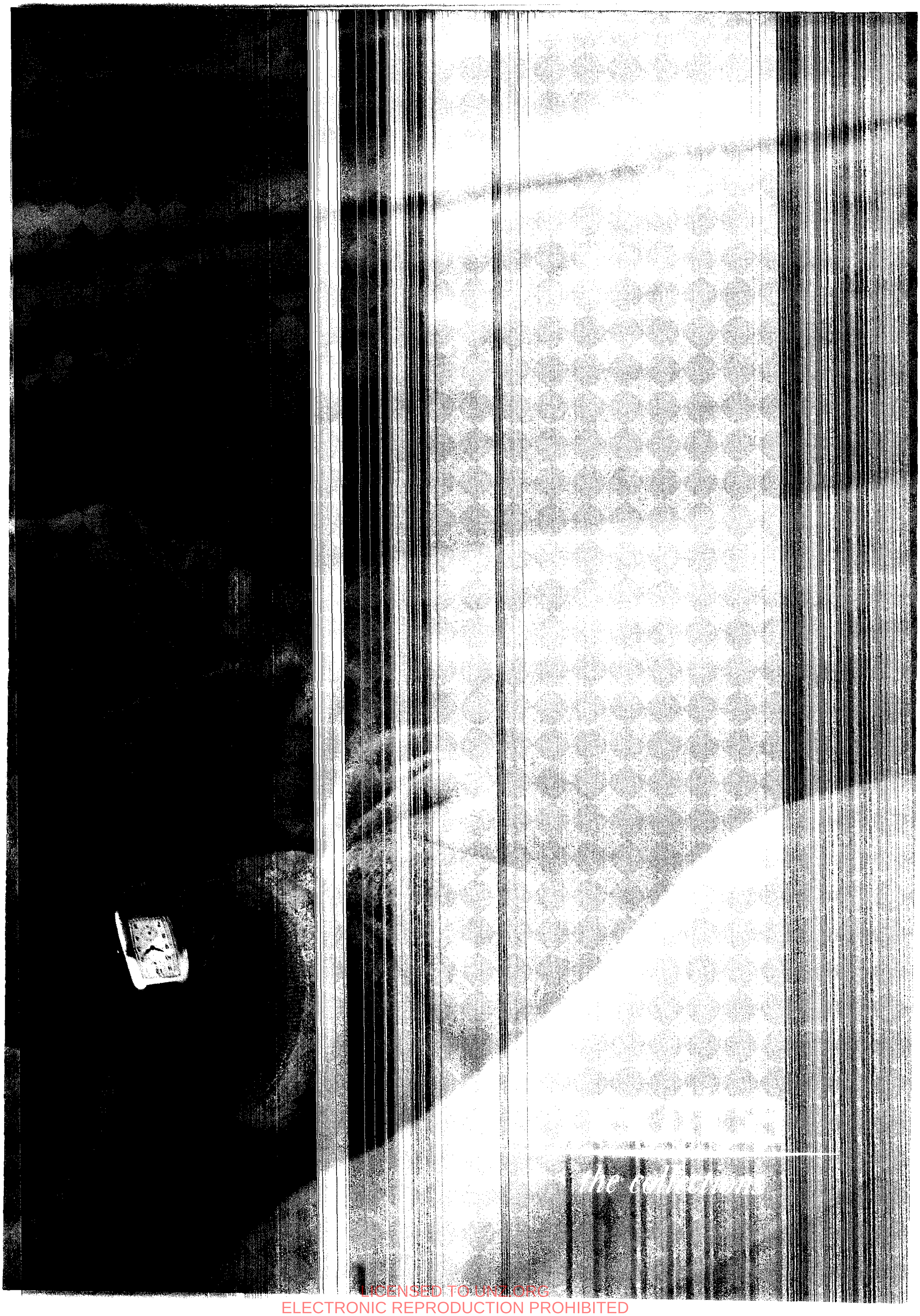

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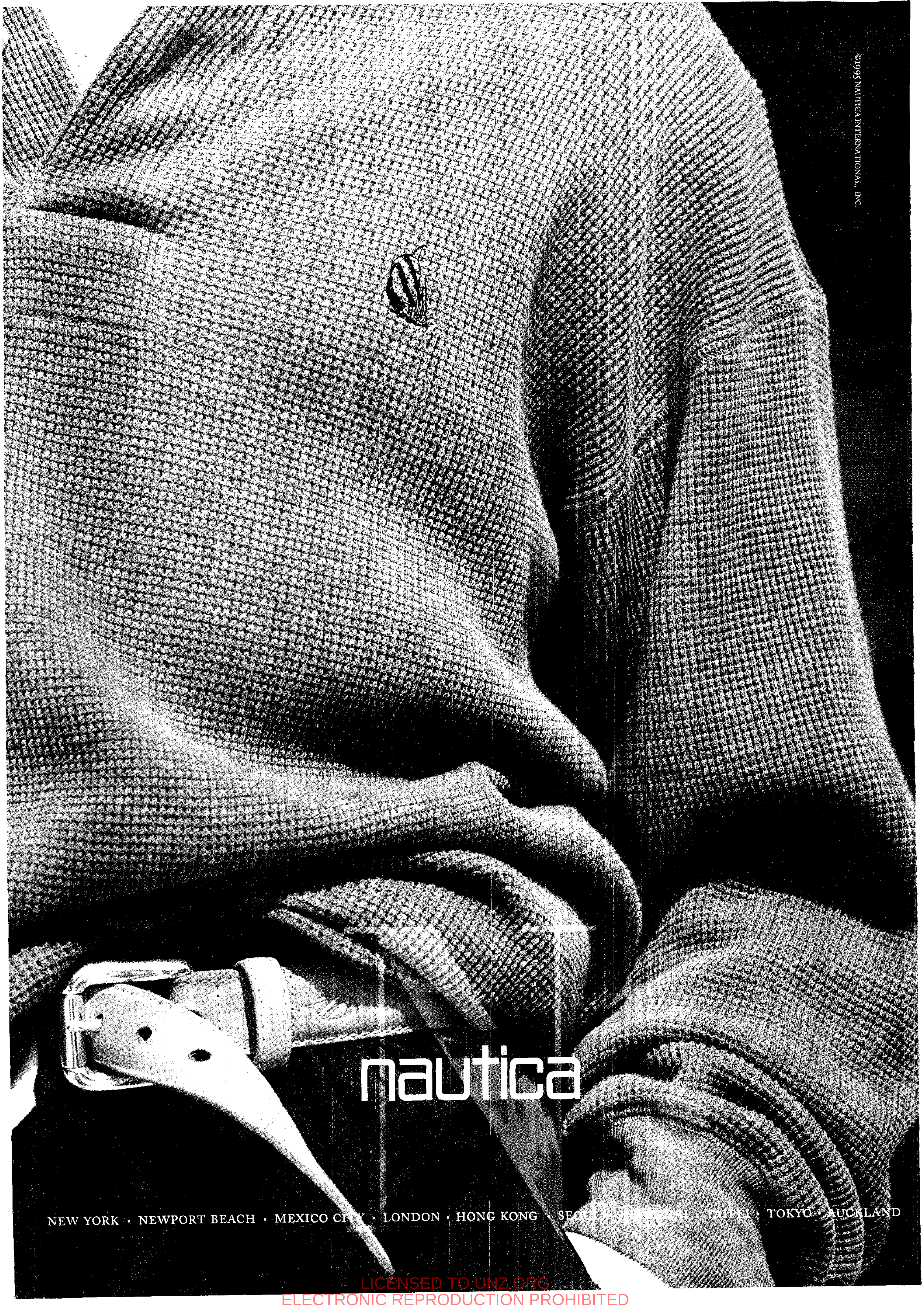
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Goshen, where the master of ceremonies announced the contestants as Roseanne Boar, Tammy Swinette, and Magnum P.I.G. Back at the office, after Heather called the medical examiner about the outcome of the autopsy of the man killed by a train, she explained the small-town rule on obituaries: "Everyone is an avid *something*. An avid gardener, an avid walker. Charlotte told me we once had someone who was an avid coupon clipper." Another rule: If you crop the Pet Parade photo so that the animal's ears poke out of the frame of the picture, the pet will be adopted more quickly. Everyone at the paper got distracted for a while, listening to reports on the scanner about an ex-convict engaged in a gun battle with a local deputy sheriff. Heather called several appliance stores to catch up on her electrical-storm story. And after that she drove to the Gun Club, where three chubby old men smoking Tiparillos were shouting a conversation—"His goddam blower went out!" and "I don't know what the hell he paid for it!" and "Well, he's tougher than whalebone!"—and firing shotguns at neon-orange clay disks. Heather chatted with them, mentioning the fact that she wouldn't be able to come to the Gun Club clambake. The men looked sad for a moment, then resumed shooting. One of them cocked a thumb at the trap and said, "You girls shoot? Oh, no, you're reporters."

"Tell me about your gun," Heather said.

He patted it and said, "Darling, it's a 12-gauge Browning."

"Nice," Heather said. "How do you spell that? Like the food brownie?"

"Exactly," the man said. "You're learning."

Near the end of my visit, Heather went to talk to a shiny-faced young man named Todd Clinton, who was on the organizing committee for Millerton Days. Todd is a local banker, a Lions Club member, the treasurer of the volunteer fire squad, a Chamber of Commerce vice-president, and the husband of the woman who owns the new seamstress shop on Main Street. He was in his office, at the Salisbury Bank & Trust Company, and he had a lot of information for Heather about Millerton Days. "We're doing snow cones and cotton candy," he said. "There will be clowns. And fifty per cent of the proceeds are going to the Eddie Collins ballfield restoration. We've hired a Mickey and Minnie— Wait, don't say that. Say, 'There will be a cute mouse couple.' We don't want to get in trouble with copyright people at Disney." Heather scribbled. Todd called his secretary to find out who was lending the freezers to store the ice for the snow cones. She told him that it was Jimmy Campbell, of Campbell & Keeler. Todd said that one of the local restaurants would be donating tablecloths, but that there weren't enough tables yet for the Millerton Days clambake. Heather said, "I could put in 'Please call Todd if you have tables.' "

"Great," Todd said. "Because it's a little bit of an issue with the tables. Oh, and for the antique-tractor show you can put in that anyone interested in showing their tractor can call me."

Heather said, "Sounds like I have it all. I just have one question. Will the clowns be free?"

Todd nodded, and said, "Absolutely free."

IT was all there in the Millerton *News* the next week: "O'CONNELL LEAVES FOR POST AT ARDSLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL" and "STORM CLOUDS REQUIRE PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT HEALTH AND PROPERTY" and "MAUREEN BONDS ENDS WORK AS VILLAGE CLERK" and "PREPARATIONS PICK UP FOR MILLERTON DAYS," and a late-breaking story about a lawsuit filed against the town board of Amenia. A few stories had evaporated, and Heather had saved a few others for a later week. It turned out that the man who had squirrelled away all the Eddie Collins memorabilia died over the weekend, and the paper had been able to get the pictures for the special Eddie Collins section from his widow. His avidity for local history was noted in his obituary, which also ran that week. By then, I had left Millerton and was back in Manhattan. Heather sent me the paper, and when I had read it I called her. I could hear the hum of the newspaper office in the background. We talked for a while, and then she said she had to go, because she was expecting another busy week. ◆

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For the first time, Lisa Foster discusses her ordeal in the two years since the death of her husband, Vincent Foster, and how she made her own investigation into why he died.

BY PETER J. BOYER

On the second anniversary of Vincent Foster's death, his widow, Lisa, drove from Little Rock to his home town of Hope, Arkansas, and sat at his grave and cried. Then she visited her late husband's mother and advised her not to watch televised coverage of the Senate Whitewater committee, whose members were spending the week verbally ransacking Foster's White House office and showily examining his empty briefcase. A few days after the committee adjourned, in early August, I went to Little Rock to visit with Lisa Foster. She had watched part of the Senate proceeding and found it appalling—not in any particular but in the fact of its existence. She had hoped that Senate hearings conducted a year ago would conclude the Vince Foster "mystery" and end the speculations about scandal and conspiracy surrounding his death. They did not. Nor did a report last year by Robert Fiske, Jr., the first Whitewater independent counsel, who had found that Foster's death was a suicide unrelated to Presidential scandal. A new Congress and a new independent counsel, Kenneth Starr, launched their own inquiries, and the conspiracy mill has never stopped. "I could not have predicted that it would continue," she says. "I kept thinking it was going to end, and it never did."

Lisa went home to Arkansas from Washington after Vince's death, leaving the place that she believes destroyed her husband and ruined her life. She had never heard of Whitewater, but within months it was to become a synonym for Bill Clinton's undoing, and Vince was posthumously cast in a key role in a complex web of alleged scandal and coverup. He had been Bill Clinton's boyhood chum and Hillary Clinton's confidant and law partner; in the White House, he was one of their most trusted aides. The revelation, five months later, that Whitewater files had been removed from Foster's office after his death suggested that he knew some damaging secret, and that it might even have pushed him to suicide. That tantalizing twist nourished a conspiracy industry on talk radio, on the cyberspace networks, and even in the mainstream press, which spun out scenarios explaining Foster's death. There were rumors of a "safe house," where Foster supposedly died; stories that he was gay or was Hillary's lover; and speculation that he was a secret agent for Israel or somehow involved in a government drug-running scheme.

Lisa Foster has remained publicly silent about her husband's death for two years. She is now convinced that it was a suicide, yet there were moments when she couldn't be certain about why he had been driven so far. When the rumors about Vince came rushing out, she sometimes thought, What if it's true? "That's one reason I never wanted to talk," she says. "I thought, As soon as I talk, they'll come up with something else they've found, and something I swore would never be true they'll tell me is true, and I won't be able to defeat it." At one point, even Vince's mother asked her, "Lisa, do you think he could have done anything?"

Lisa hates that doubt and has overcome it, having undertaken her own investigation of her husband's death. But her certainty about Vince is a hard comfort, dearly purchased. To believe completely in him, she says, she had to learn to believe in the despair that killed him.

Before Lisa Foster's husband went to Washington with the Clintons, in January, 1993, the expectations of her life had been fully met. One of six children, she was reared a Catholic in the Protestant city of Nashville. Her father, an insurance broker, provided a solidly comfortable middle-class existence, with membership in the country club, and society débuts for his daughters. Lisa was educated by Dominican nuns through high school, and then went to Sweet Briar, a women's college in the Old Virginia tradition. Social life centered on big date weekends, when fraternity boys from the University of Virginia and from Davidson and from Washington and Lee would caravan in and party. It was on such a weekend in Lisa's sophomore year that she met Vince Foster, a sophomore at Davidson, on a blind date. "We had an absolute ball," she recalls. "I kissed him on the first date—I'd probably never done that in my life. I took one look at him and I thought, Oh, my God, you're the best-lookin' thing I've ever seen. I just went head over heels in love with him." Vince seemed so smart, and so interested in the world; Lisa, wanting to impress him, ordered a subscription to *Time*. When Vince told his mother about Lisa, he said, "She's a math major and she's a Catholic. She's not pretty, but she's kind of cute." Vince brought her home to Hope, and there his father, waiting outside the family's big white house, pegged his future daughter-in-law exactly right, and won her forever. "Well, I think she's beautiful," he said. "She looks just like Doris Day."

They were married in St. Henry Catholic Church in Nashville in April, 1968, when Vince was in his first year of law school, at Vanderbilt. His father had wanted him to go into the family real-

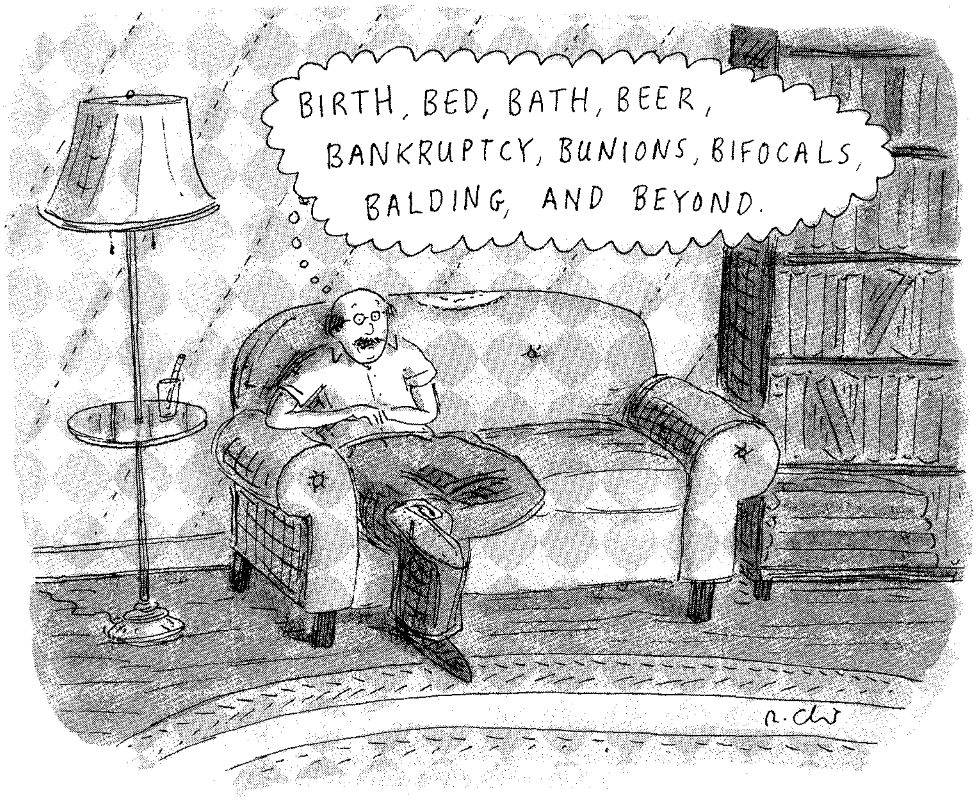
Lisa Foster, opposite: "There were certain things I know, because I was there, and there are some things I don't know—that I can never prove, except by faith."

estate business, but Vince, deeply reticent by nature, knew that he was no salesman, and he had chosen law. At the height of the American buildup in Vietnam, Vince joined the Arkansas National Guard; that required his regular presence in Hope, so he transferred to the University of Arkansas, in Fayetteville. Lisa got a job as a librarian, and Vince spent every day at the law-school library, developing a work ethic that inspired awe. "He'd work all day while the other law-school husbands were home watching the soaps," Lisa says. He overprepared himself to such an extent that at exam time studying became superfluous. He graduated first in his class, and earned the top score on the state bar exam. Eager to start his career, he skipped commencement and went to work at the small but growing Rose Law Firm, in Little Rock.

Lisa was eager to get started, too. "All I ever, ever wanted to do was have children," she says. "And then, when I met Vince, all I wanted to do was be his wife and have children. I knew I might have to work, and I was enough of a feminist even then to want to prove that I could. And I did, and that was fine. But I didn't really want to have a career." Four years after they were married, they had their first child, Vincent, Jr., and he was followed by a girl, Laura, and by another boy, John (whom they called by his middle name, Brugh). Lisa did volunteer work for the Junior League, played tennis at the Little Rock Country Club, and taught swimming to local kids, including Chelsea Clinton. As Vince prospered at the Rose firm, he and Lisa bought a house in the Heights, an area near the club which proved to be the neighborhood of choice for future Clinton insiders. The Fosters' house, a big white Colonial, was redecorated by their next-door neighbor, Kaki Hockersmith, who would one day design the living quarters of Hillary Clinton's White House. People considered the presidency of the state bar to be Vince's for the asking, and, beyond that, he seemed a natural choice for the federal bench.

HARRY BENSON

In their twenty-five years together, Lisa and Vince fashioned a sort of compact that guided their lives: Vince worked furiously, and made all the big decisions; Lisa provided the support system, running their home, minding the kids, and organizing their social life.


BIRTH, BED, BATH, BEER, BANKRUPTCY, BUNIONS, BIFOCALS, BALDING, AND BEYOND.
R. Chast

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Over time, this delineation of roles became quite comfortable, and the line seldom blurred. Vince only rarely involved himself in the usual household battles with the kids, and Lisa kept her distance from his work. When Vince had a big case, he prepared for it frantically, day and night, right up until his court date, all the while bemoaning his chances, declaring that he was certain to lose. But he almost invariably won, or settled; he seldom lost. Lisa learned that this was just Vince's way of working, and it further deepened the line; one day, it would also obscure the signs of desperation.

LISA FOSTER was a friend and contemporary of Hillary Clinton's. They belonged to the same social set, in one of the most insular towns in America, yet their lives could hardly have been more different. Hillary was Little Rock's model of the nineteen-eighties superwoman—a high-powered lawyer, the state's First Lady, the mother of a little girl. Lisa was a stay-at-home mom. In the culture of their place and time, Lisa's life was very much the norm, and Hillary's an aberration. Bill Clinton's Yankee-lawyer wife, who defiantly kept her maiden name, seemed indifferent to the customs of her husband's home state. (Some of the Little Rock women had a beauty tip for Hillary's hair: Bleach it.)

It was Vince, not Lisa, who made the friendship between the Fosters and the Clintons. Bill had lived next door to him as a boy, and Vince met Hillary when they both did work for the Legal Aid Society, in the late seventies. After Hillary joined the Rose Law Firm, she and Vince and Webster Hubbell, another senior partner, became best friends, a troika. Vince valued his workplace relationship with Hillary, and when office politics reared he became her protector. Lisa and Hillary didn't lunch and shop together, but the Fosters were frequent guests at the Governor's Mansion. The Clintons went to the Fosters' pool parties and had more than one Christmas dinner with them. Lisa and Hillary sometimes discussed the different nature of their lives, and perhaps their exchanges held the hint of an edge. Lisa marvelled at Hillary's ability to manage a career and a child while serving as Arkansas's First Lady. "I don't know how you do it," she recalls saying once to Hillary, and Hillary replied, "Lisa, I don't know how *you* do it. I could never stay home with three kids all day."

On Election Night in 1992, Vince and Lisa were part of the inner circle of Arkansans celebrating Clinton's victory at the Governor's Mansion. It was a joyous night for the Fosters, uncomplicated by any suspicion that their lives would be changed by Clinton's success. The thought of going to Washington, Lisa says, "never entered my mind." Once, back in Vince's law-school days, Lisa had asked Vince, who was interested in the political issues of the time, if he would ever consider entering politics himself, and his answer was firm: no. Intensely cautious and inward, Vince lacked the politician's nature. "He didn't want to be a politician, because he didn't like to be in a good mood all the time," Lisa says. "And, obviously, he wasn't."

Yet during the weeks of transition, as Clinton assembled his government in Little Rock, the prospect of Vince's joining the team inevitably arose. He would come home from a lunch with Hillary and raise with Lisa the issue of going to Washington. Other Arkansans were leaping aboard, and Lisa told her husband, "I'm afraid if you don't do it you'll always be sorry." Then came word that Clinton had chosen Mack McLarty to be the White House chief of staff. Mack and Vince were old, close friends from Hope, and Lisa and Mack's wife, Donna McLarty, served on volunteer boards together. That decided it. On Christmas Eve, Clinton made Foster a formal offer, and when Foster accepted it the President-elect asked, "Are you sure you want to do this?" The job, deputy White House counsel, seemed perfect for Foster. He hated the spotlight, but as deputy to the chief counsel, Bernard Nussbaum, he would hold an insider's position of influence and trust. Besides, he was taken by the notion of a higher calling; it was a moment, soon to evaporate, when Clinton's promise of change carried the force of real possibility. Yes, Foster was sure he wanted to do it. He and most of the other Arkansans who followed the new, activist President and his wife to Washington genuinely believed that they were on a mission to do good.

AT first, it seemed to Lisa that Vince was happy in Washington, maybe even a little too happy. "He was calling me, saying things like 'Last night we had cocktails on the Truman balcony and Judy Collins was there, and we all went out to dinner,' " Lisa recalls. She was not there, because Vince had insisted that she stay behind in Little Rock. Two of their children, Vincent and Laura, were away at college, but the youngest, Brugh, was in the middle of his junior year in high school, and Vince feared that an interruption might hinder his chances of getting into a good college. The family would join Vince at the end of the school year, and in the meantime he would live with his sister, Sheila, who was also going to work for the Clinton Administration.

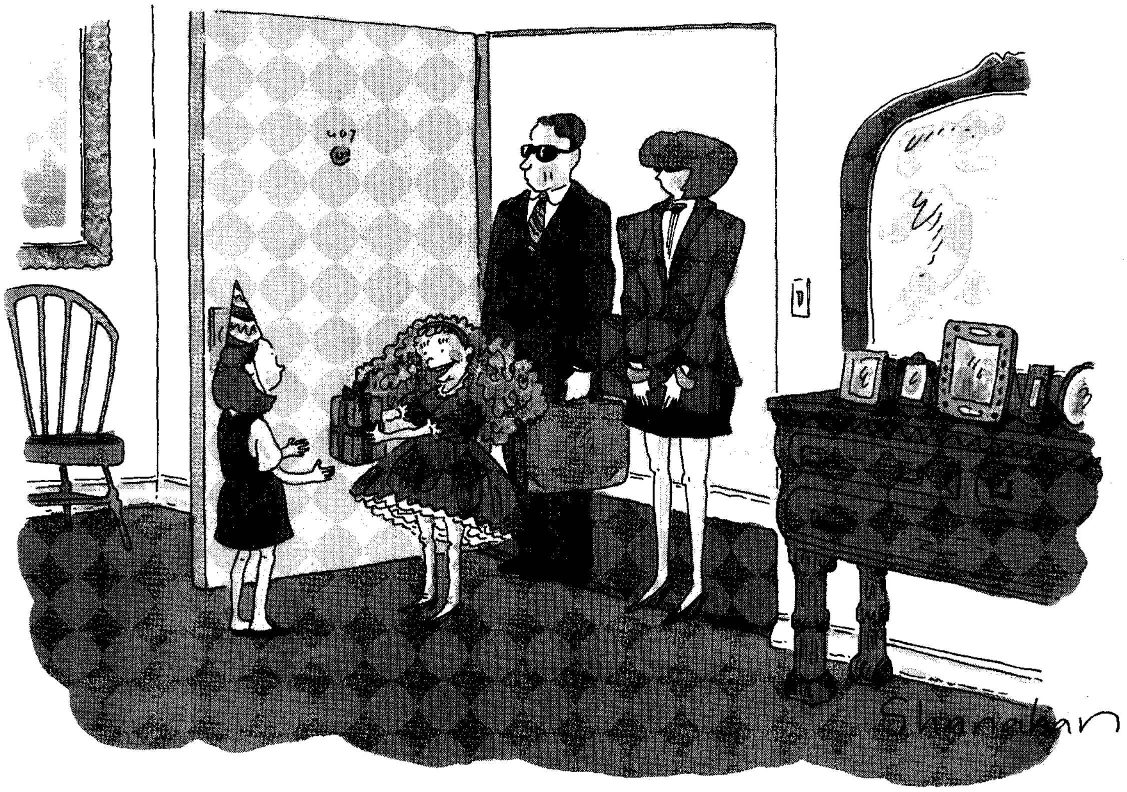
Lisa was unhappy with this arrangement, and unreserved about voicing her feelings. It was the first time they had ever been separated. "I was angry at Vince about ninety per cent of the time," she says. "I wasn't angry at him for going. I was just angry at him for ignoring us and leaving us behind, and making me have to deal with everything, all the decisions, and he was going up and getting all the so-called glory." She and the children went to Washington for the Inauguration, but after the swearing-in Vince went straight to the White House to work, leaving his wife and children at the curb, uncertain how they would get back to Sheila's house. Lisa was irritated by this, and didn't even go to the ball. Back in Little Rock, she found the prospect of running the household and preparing for the family's departure overwhelming. She had never expected to move out of her house, and when it was finally time to pack up she sat down on the floor and cried. She called Vince, and he told her to find a packer in the Yellow Pages. Lisa says that she feels guilty about the way she behaved during those months, especially in the light of what she soon discovered about Vince's life in Washington. "I whined about the whole thing," she says. "We had a lot of conversations over the phone that were sort of short, curt conversations, and we realized that we were both so tense about what we had to do that it was not easy for us to console each other."

Lisa soon came to feel more optimistic about their new life. During Brugh's spring break, she went to Washington and found a small row house in Georgetown. It needed some renovation, but it was in a nice neighborhood—on Cambridge Place, next door to Senator Richard Shelby, of Alabama—and it was (by Washington standards) affordable. She moved Vince in, and got Brugh into the élite Sidwell Friends School, which Chelsea Clinton attends, for his senior year. Back in Little Rock, she managed to get their belongings organized for the move and the house rented.

School ended, and as Lisa prepared to leave Little Rock one more packing chore presented itself. Vince's father, a hunter, had died two years earlier, and Vince had taken his collection of guns. Lisa looked at the shotguns—"I'll bet you there were ten of them in the house," she says—and deemed them too troublesome to pack up (Vince wasn't much of a hunter anyway), but she didn't know what to do with them. She worried that if she left the shotguns in the attic the heat might cause the shells to explode. Finally, she bought a lock, put the shotguns in Vince's wine closet, and locked it. There were several handguns, too, including a .38 special, with an etched handle, which Vince's father had kept by his bed. But they were small and easy to move, so Lisa packed them and took them along to Washington.

Almost from the beginning, Vince realized he should have stayed in Little Rock. Like all the other Clinton appointees, he discovered that going to work in the White House after twelve years of Republican rule was a bit like occupying scorched earth. The counsel's offices had been left bare by the Bush people. At the Rose Law Firm, Vince had worked behind the burnished wood door of a spacious corner office; in the White House, his office had one window and was so small that the copying machine had to be installed in the hallway.

But the physical discomfort was secondary to the psychic discomfort, especially when things went wrong, and everything, it seemed, was going wrong. The aborted attempts, involving Zoë Baird and Kimba Wood, to fill the Attorney General job, and the ungraceful retreat from Lani Guinier as head of the Justice Department's civil-rights division, were more than just political em-



"My parents couldn't come, so I brought two of my backers."

barrassments; they helped to establish the impression that the Clinton people talked a good game but weren't up to the grownup job of governing. These were problems that occurred on Foster's turf, and he was the sort of man to take such failures personally, and hard. He even assumed blame for Waco, somehow believing that the disastrous F.B.I. raid on the Branch Davidians' compound was his fault. Vince and the rest of the Clinton team, Lisa notes, "weren't up there to do bad things, and everything—just like Waco—just blew up in their faces, and it absolutely destroyed him."

Back in Little Rock, at the Rose Law Firm, Vince had had the luxury of coping with one problem at a time. In Washington, Lisa says, "he couldn't relax and make decisions; everything was immediate, and it had to be correct, because of the stakes involved. The intense scrutiny that they were getting made you feel like no matter what you do you're going to get criticized." She adds, "It was just like some dog nippin' at your ankles all the time."

And then there was Travelgate. Soon after the Clinton team took over the White House, they found that the Travel Office—which handled, among other things, transportation for the press corps—was in disarray; staff members were even suspected of embezzlement and kickbacks. Under Foster's direction, the counsel's office ordered an independent audit, and it resulted in the firing of seven staff members (ultimately, only one was indicted, and will go on trial next month); in a rather stupid move, the White House named a Clinton relative to temporarily manage some Travel Office business. Bill Kennedy, another Rose lawyer on the counsel staff, had talked to the F.B.I. about a possible criminal investigation of the travel staff, and the White House was accused of abusing the Justice Department to cover up its clumsy cronyism. An internal inquiry was ordered, and Kennedy was reprimanded. Some people in the White House thought that Foster should have been, too, but he escaped direct rebuke. Foster was angered both by the reprimand to Kennedy and by the threat to him, and felt deeply wronged by the White House.

Things got worse, with the publication in June of the first of three now famous *Wall Street Journal* editorials that were harshly critical of Foster and the Arkansas "mores" that he and other Rose alumni supposedly represented. The *Journal* struck at Foster on a number of fronts, ranging from his disinclination to provide the paper with a photograph of himself (in violation of the Freedom of Information Act, the *Journal* asserted) to his brief aimed at keeping Hillary's health-care-commission meetings closed to the press and the public. In what soon proved a cruel irony, the *Journal* exploded Foster's anonymity by printing the outline of a man filled with a question mark, under the headline "WHO IS VINCENT FOSTER?"

Two weeks after Lisa and the kids arrived in Washington, just as Travelgate was unfolding, Vince told her that he had made a mistake and had decided that he should resign. Something was discernibly amiss, but Lisa didn't see it. "You can't quit," she told him. "I just got here." She wanted a taste of the glamour she thought Vince had been enjoying, but it was not forthcoming. "He didn't want to go out," she says. "He didn't want to do anything fun. He wanted me to stay home and cook. He never came home until nine or ten o'clock at night, then went straight to bed, and he got up and left at a quarter to eight in the morning. By the time we got there, it was basically awful. It was like: Well, I just moved out of my house, and I moved up here and he is unhappy. I have to make him happy. This is going to have to get better."

The two older Foster children got summer jobs, and Brugh did volunteer work, as was required by Sidwell Friends. Lisa undertook the redecoration of the house and played tennis with a friend at the Arlington Y. "I was kind of getting to like it," she says. "I loved having a place and fixing it up. I had all my cute living-room furniture in there, and I was beginning to think it was going to be possible for us to live there."

At the time, Lisa never considered the possibility that Vince was suffering from depression. In her world, emotional problems were not discussed, and depression in its clinical sense was an alien concept. "I knew he was down," she says. "I just didn't know that people committed suicide. I'd never had any experience with this at all—I hated it when people said he was depressed, because I didn't know what depression was." Perhaps she was too ready to dismiss Vince's worries over Travelgate as his characteristic overreaction to work. "I kept telling him that it wasn't any big deal. Nobody cared about it." She knew that the press was tormenting Clinton, but she thought that was overblown, too. "The press had it all out of proportion, just like Vince had it all out of proportion."

Looking back on their tense, brief time together in Washington, Lisa is filled with images of a desperately troubled man. He lost his appetite, and some nights he didn't sleep at all. "He got up one morning and said, 'I did not sleep one wink last night.' He looked awful. And I said, 'Oh, Vince, surely you slept some, you probably just

"I think I'll head back to the house for a little Net-sex and a nap."

don't feel like you did.' And he said, 'No, I didn't sleep at all. I just don't think I can go back down there.' And the next thing I knew he was dressed and had on his coat and tie and he looked like a million dollars. And I thought, Well, then, tonight you'll sleep."

He was losing weight, and Lisa remembers that he began absently wringing his hands, incessantly rubbing the thumb and forefinger of one hand into the palm of the other. At a meeting at Brugh's school, Vince slumped in his chair, Lisa recalls, and she thought he looked just the way his father looked in the weeks before he died, of cancer. "All I knew to do was to tell him I didn't think it was that big a deal and that everything would be O.K., and not to worry about it so much, and to take care of himself, and try to get more rest."

THIS AREA RESERVED FOR OLDER DADS WITH TINY TOTS
W Miller

As a college freshman in 1963, Lisa had travelled to Washington for John Kennedy's funeral. Now she went to the church where Kennedy had worshipped—Holy Trinity, in Georgetown—hoping to find help for her husband. "I'd go there every Sunday and I'd pray for Vince," she says. "I'd say, 'Please help him make these hard decisions, and help him make the right decisions, so that he won't be so upset.' "

One evening in early July, Vince again told Lisa that he meant to resign. He was still unable to sleep. Worried, perhaps even a bit exasperated, she told him she was tired of hearing about how miserably he was failing in his job, and she urged him to take the offensive; she suggested that he write down some of the reasons that his difficulties were *not* his fault. He went upstairs, sat on the bed, and, on a sheet of yellow legal paper, wrote the list of complaints that would soon be found, torn into twenty-seven pieces, at the bottom of his briefcase, by an associate White House counsel, Steve Neuwirth. It was not a suicide note, Lisa says, but a kind of defense brief. "After that, he said one night, 'I haven't resigned yet. I've just written my opening argument,' " she recalls. "And I think that when he wrote those things down it was as if he were defending himself in what he thought was going to be some kind of congressional investigation. And the *Wall Street Journal* was saying, 'Who is Vince Foster?' and I think in some ways he felt he had to defend himself. I was trying to tell him that he didn't, that he hadn't done anything wrong, that he should just basically carry on and it would all go away. But it didn't."

LISA still had hope, and it seemed to her that this difficult period in Washington in some ways had brought her closer to Vince. "He was talking to me so much, and I thought, Well, really we have each other, and I'll just be there for him, and maybe that will be the good that comes out of this—that we will get closer. He needs me, because he doesn't have anybody else." Lisa even talked Vince into taking a break from Washington, a weekend trip to an inn on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

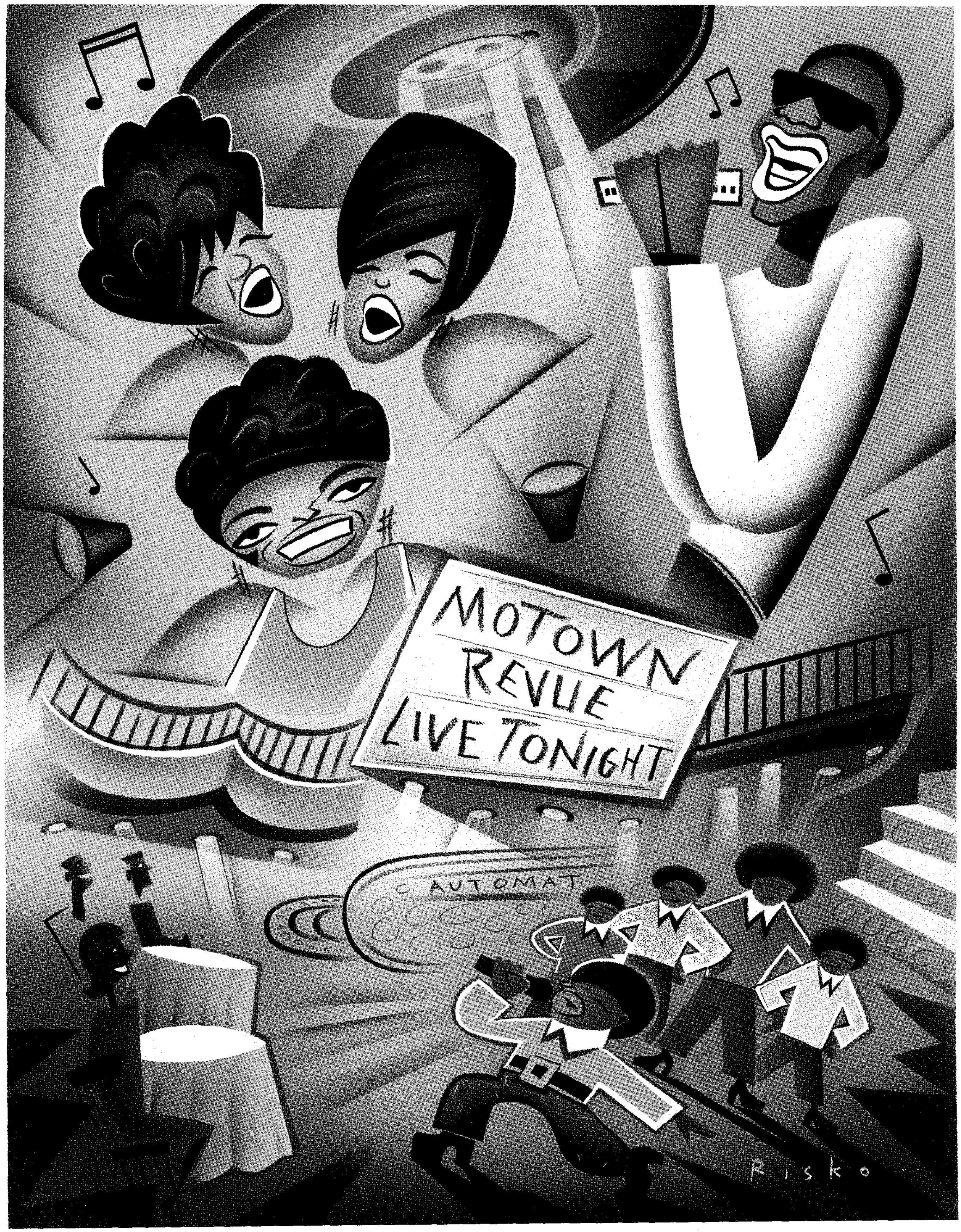
The day they left for the shore, Friday, July 16th, was a particularly bad one for Vince. He told Lisa that his heart felt as though it were pounding out of his chest, and that day he went to the White House medical unit for a blood-pressure test. His pressure measured 132/84, well within normal limits. Realizing that there was nothing wrong with his heart, he telephoned his sister, Sheila, and told her that he thought he was suffering from depression. She gave him the phone numbers of three psychiatrists. (One of them later testified, at the first round of Senate hearings, that Sheila had spoken to him about her brother, telling him that Vince held a very sensitive position at the White House and that his depression was "directly related to highly sensitive and confidential matters.") Around lunchtime, Vince called one of the names on the list, but didn't leave a message. He tried again later, and again left no message. Apparently embarrassed, and concerned that a diagnosis of mental illness would complete the ruin of his reputation, he charged the calls to his home phone.

Vince was visibly tense as he and Lisa drove out of town. Traffic was bad, and en route they realized that they had left Vince's suitcase at home, by the back door. His mood didn't improve much when they got to the shore. Again, he seemed single-mindedly focussed on getting out of the White House. At dinner that night, Lisa recalls, "I asked him if he felt trapped, and tears came to his eyes, and he cried."

The next morning, she remembers Vince sprawled on a park lawn overlooking Chesapeake Bay, negotiating their departure date. They now agreed

SKETCHBOOK • BY ROBERT RISKO

THE MOTOWN CAFÉ


MOTOWN REVUE LIVE TONIGHT
AUTOMAT
RISKO

Joining the West Fifty-seventh Street theme park this week is the Motown Café, which pays tribute both to the classic Detroit sound and to the site's original tenant: an Automat.

that they would not stay for the full Clinton term, but she hoped to remain in Washington at least until Brugh graduated from Sidwell, the following year. Vince wanted to leave immediately. Finally, they decided that Vince would stay in his job until Christmas, then find other work in Washington until Brugh graduated.

Vince's spirits seemed to lift after that, and they even talked about living on a houseboat until they returned to Little Rock. Back at the inn, they were wakened from a nap by a call from Webster Hubbell's wife, Suzy, who was staying with her husband at the home of mutual friends nearby. Hubbell invited the Fosters to join them for dinner that night and for the day on Sunday, and they did. Again, Lisa thought she saw Vince brightening. But something still seemed to be off-key. She told Vince that she intended to telephone their family doctor in Little Rock, Larry Watkins, to see if he could suggest anything. Whenever Vince had a cold or the flu, he asked Lisa to call Dr. Watkins for him, but this time he told her he would make the call himself. On Monday, he did call Watkins, and told him he thought he might need something for depression. Watkins prescribed the antidepressant Desyrel and telephoned in the order to a Washington pharmacy. Vince did not tell Lisa he had made the call. "He never, ever mentioned the word 'depression' to me," she says, "or anything even remotely resembling mental illness. Ever."

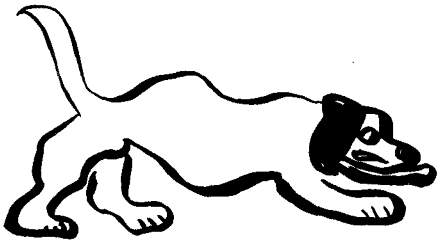
That day, July 19th, Foster arrived at his office with three stamped, addressed envelopes. His secretary noticed the addresses on two of them: one was to his life-insurance company, and the other was to his mother, in Hope. The envelope to the insurance company was subsequently found to contain his premium payment; the one to his mother contained papers completing the transfer of oil leases from his father's estate to his and Lisa's name.

That evening, at home, Vince received a call from the President inviting him to watch a movie at the White House. He declined. "That's good," Lisa told him. "You need a good night's sleep." Besides, she had prepared a family meal. That afternoon, the medication from Dr. Watkins, thirty fifty-milligram tablets, had been delivered to the house. Vince took one tablet. Once again, Lisa seemed to sense a lightening in his mood. "He came into the kitchen, put his arm around me, and kind of joked with me," she recalls. "He went to the wine cabinet and said, 'Maybe that's what I need, some tannin.' Then we went up and got in bed and watched TV." They talked about their weekend away, and about trying to go away again the next weekend. Lisa asked Vince if he would do something special for her—go on a date with her the following night, Tuesday. Vince said that he thought he might have to attend a birthday dinner that night but that he would try.

On Tuesday, Vince left for work at 8 A.M., and Lisa noted that he failed to kiss her goodbye. She started to say something, but stopped herself. "I was trying to act so chipper," she says. "I didn't want to make a big deal. But he just had his back to me, so stiff. And he just walked out." She played tennis at eight-thirty and then went to a charity meeting with Donna McLarty. Afterward, the two women went to the lounge of the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown, and drank Perrier and sounded a theme that had become increasingly common among the expatriate Arkansans—the nastiness of Washington politics.

Lisa eventually went home, and around five o'clock she called the White House to find out about the birthday party, and was told that it was not until the following week. She figured that Vince would be home soon, for their date.

But Vince didn't come home, so Lisa called the White House again, and this time she was told that the President was appearing on "Larry King Live." "I said, 'Oh, he must be with a bunch of people watching the President on "Larry King," ' " Lisa recalls. She and Laura went upstairs to watch the King show. A few minutes later, the doorbell rang, and Laura went to the door. It was some volunteers from Greenpeace, soliciting donations.



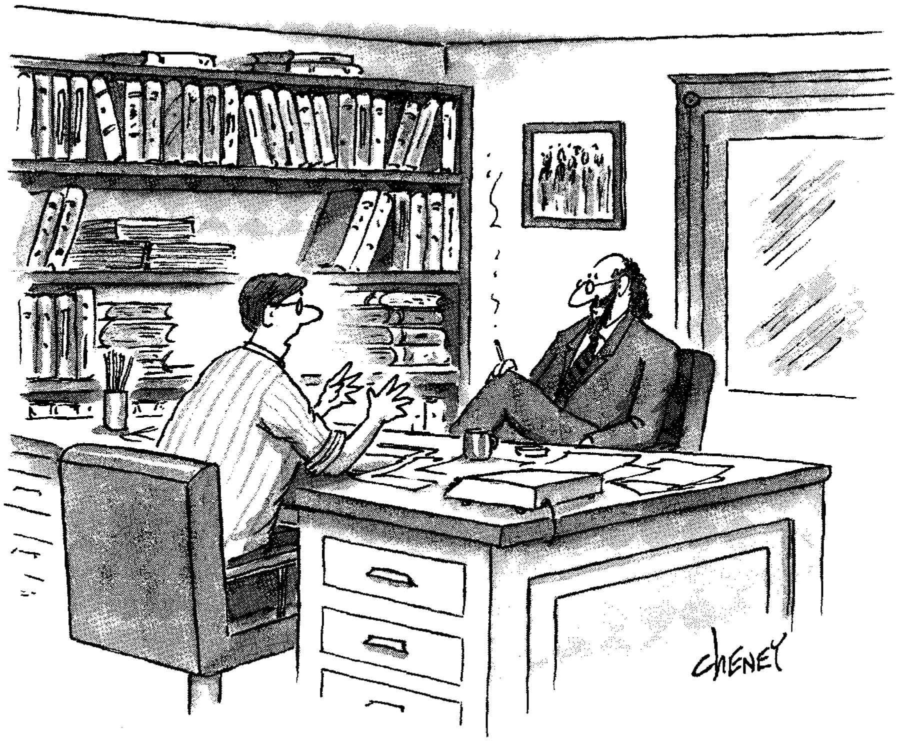
On television, King said that the President had graciously consented to extend his visit for another half hour. Lisa recalls that she groaned and thought, Oh, come on, Bill! You've got to learn when to quit! But a moment later the President and King came back on the screen and King said that Clinton had another engagement, and had to leave shortly. "He had this funny look on his face, the President did," she says.

The doorbell rang again. This time when Laura answered it, there were two officers from the Park Police, a man and a woman. "Mother! Mother! Something awful. Come quick," she cried. The man said to Lisa, "Mrs. Foster, your husband, Vincent, is dead."

Lisa thought the officer had made a mistake. "I said, 'No, no, that's my son Vincent.' And he said, 'No, your husband Vincent is dead.' " She protested again that the officer must mean Vincent, Jr., because he and Brugh had gone to borrow their uncle's van, and Lisa imagined that there had been an accident. "And they said, 'No, your husband has shot himself.' " She is still remorseful about her first response to that realization. She says, "The saddest thing is that I had this little bit of relief that it wasn't Vincent."

Once the news registered, Lisa says, she didn't question it. "I never thought he'd been murdered. The worst possible thing had happened, but it was like everything came together." Lisa was told that Vince had shot himself with a .38 special, which she realized was one of the guns she had packed up and taken to Washington. She wanted to know whether her husband had shot himself in the mouth or at the temple. "I didn't know that he knew how to kill himself," she says. "But the children reminded me that he had just watched 'A Few Good Men,' and that is how the guy in the movie did it—he shot himself in the mouth."

In the chaos of that night, with the police and friends from the White House in her home, Lisa tried to console her daughter. Laura had been Vince's pride, and she adored him. When school was over that spring, she had spent a month with her father—before her mother arrived—cooking and cleaning



"Words on paper, Ted. Just give us words on paper. Our advertising people will do the rest."

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for him, and acting as his companion at official functions. Lisa now told her, "Laura, you had a better relationship with your father in twenty-one years than most people ever have. You're just going to have to let that come through."

WEBSTER HUBBELL and his wife took care of the move back to Arkansas. As Lisa left Washington, she felt a wave of revulsion against the place. "I can remember looking at Georgetown and thinking it was the ugliest set of buildings I had ever seen," she says. She was determined to get through the funeral without breaking down; she stared ahead, focussing on objects and avoiding eye contact.

Her friends wondered how she would manage, with two children in college and a third on his way, but financial survival was not what worried her. "Everybody thought, Poor Lisa and the kids won't have any insurance money," she recalls, because Vince's death was a suicide. But his policy had a suicide clause, allowing death-benefit payment to survivors if the insured party had held the policy for a prescribed period, and Vince had. And over the years he had built a college trust fund for each of the children. "Unfortunately—or fortunately, I don't know which—he was the type of person who probably knew exactly what he was doing in that respect," Lisa says. "He probably thought we'd be well taken care of and maybe we'd be better off, financially, if he were dead, because if he went to a psychiatrist he'd never have another job."

At first, Lisa was preoccupied not with the nature of Vince's death but with tremendous despair at his loss. When she thought of life without him, she found herself embracing the idea of death. "I wanted to die after he died," she says. "There were a lot of times when I thought, This isn't worth it." She remembers being on an airplane with one of her sisters after Vince died and having to fly through a tornado-spewing storm system. Her sister was frightened. "Don't worry," Lisa told her. "You're with me, and God's not gonna let me die, it would be too easy. I would just love to die." But these thoughts inevitably led to images of her children. "I couldn't stand the idea of my children having to go through it more than once. It's just the most awful thing in the world, and I can't let them think that I'd do it, too. I mean, somehow, I've got to stay alive, for them."

Lisa felt angry, too, at everyone—the Clintons, Vince, politicians, those Arkansans who stayed in Washington. She would see a picture of the White House on the news, and get livid. "I hated everything. I was mad as hell." She was angriest, perhaps, at God. She had always been a devout Catholic, never questioning, for example, that her own children would be raised in her faith, even though Vince was a Presbyterian. But when he died she suffered a crisis of faith, and has not yet emerged from it. At first, she questioned God. "Why didn't Vince run out of gas? Why didn't he have a car wreck? Why didn't he call? Why did you have to let him get so bad off when all he wanted to do was go up there and help his country and do some good things for people?" And then she stopped praying. She thought of Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, who surveyed his dead shipmates and was stricken by the fact of his own survival: "I looked to heaven and tried to pray;/But or ever a prayer had gusht,/A wicked whisper came, and made/My heart as dry as dust."

"Well, that's exactly the way I felt," she says. "You can't pray, because you don't know what you're praying for. You're mad as hell at God, and so you don't know what to say. You don't want to say, 'Help me,' because you think He's screwed you. What are you going to say—'I praise you because you're great, even though you've done this to me'?"

She kept going to church, because she didn't know how to stop going. But she wore jeans and a sweatshirt, and sat in silence through the service. People sent her cards urging her to turn to Jesus: "If I got one card about Jesus, I must have gotten a thousand. And I thought, Well, where was Jesus when I needed him? I don't know why God did this to me. I wouldn't do this to somebody I loved. You know, we're supposed to be children of God—I wouldn't do something like this to one of my children. It wasn't like we did something bad and we deserved it. I just didn't understand it."

The morning after Vince killed himself, she telephoned Bernard Nussbaum, searching for an explanation, and asked, "Bernie, did you fire Vince yesterday?" Nussbaum said of course he hadn't, but later told Robert Fiske's office that he had noticed that Vince had become less productive, and that he had urged him to take a vacation.

Lisa says, "I was trying to figure out what could possibly have happened that put him over the edge. I kept thinking, Now, what could have made him eat lunch and go out three or four hours later and shoot himself?" After Vince's funeral, she returned to Washington to talk to the Park Police, and Nussbaum gave her a partial answer, showing her Vince's torn-up note.

EVEN as various law-enforcement agencies and congressional hearings were investigating Vince's death, Lisa undertook an inquiry of her own. She went through every box of personal files from Vince's office which had been returned to her. "If you saw them, you'd believe even more what I'm telling you," she says. "There was a file for his father, a file for his mother, a file for the children's medical records. He was a perfect husband, keeping perfect records." She examined his American Express bills for the previous six years; she studied their telephone bill, and when she saw a number she didn't recognize (such as that of the psychiatrist) she dialled it. "I did all of it, every last piece of scrap paper, name, number—oh, I investigated everything. As a matter of fact, when the F.B.I. wanted my phone bill I'd already figured it all out for them. I had the name of everybody he called."

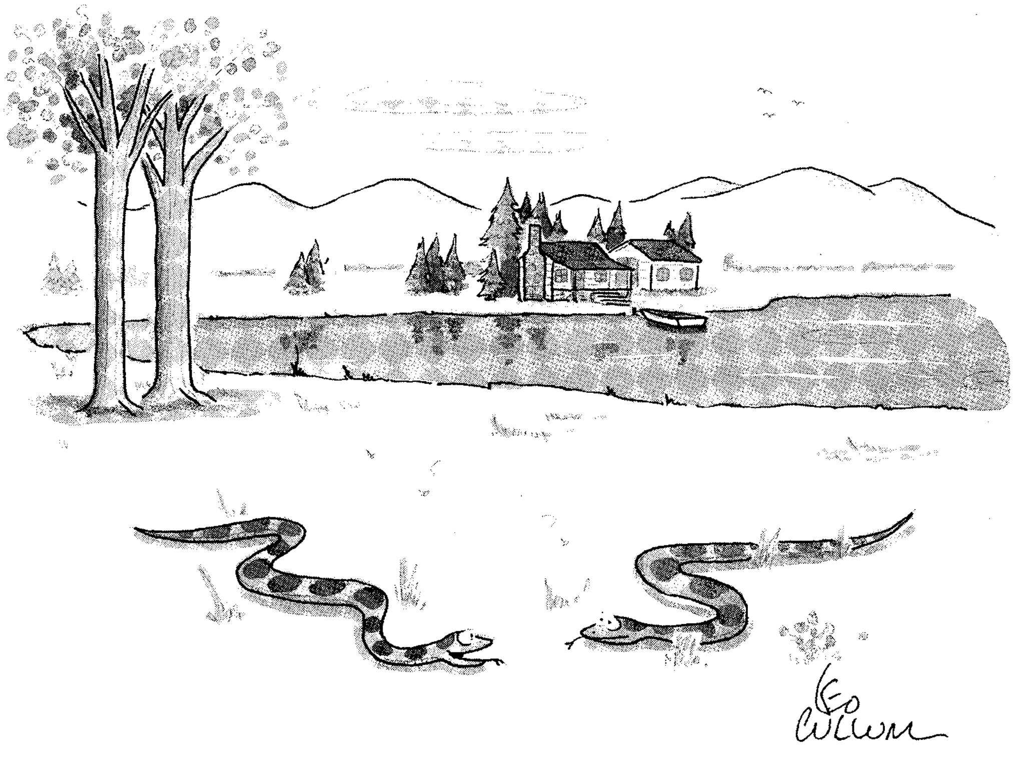
Curious about why Foster had an appointment scheduled for July 21st—the day after his death—with Jim Lyons, a Colorado attorney who had organized the Clintons' early responses to the Whitewater allegations, she called Lyons and asked him what the meeting was to be about. He told her that Vince was worried about a possible congressional hearing on the Travelgate matter.

Lisa has satisfied herself that Whitewater was not among Vince's anxieties—a view that echoes the White House line and the conclusion of the Fiske report. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to suppose that Foster was well aware the Clintons could face future political embarrassments over their Little Rock land deal. As Hillary Clinton's former law partner and the Clintons' friend, Vince was also handling some of their personal legal work, including their taxes on Whitewater from 1990 to 1992. Just a few weeks ago, in advance of this summer's hearings, it was revealed that Foster had written a memo in which he described Whitewater as "a can of worms you shouldn't open."

Lisa says that her search helped her cope with the wilder speculative scenarios about Vince—the tales of secret Swiss bank accounts, of involvement in a C.I.A.-sponsored drug-smuggling operation, of the alleged use of a "safe house," and so on. "I got the last six years of American Express when they started talking about him flying to Switzerland, just so I could say, 'I know he didn't do it, because it's right here before me,' " she says. "There is no secret. Anything that I know about his death I have told the Park Police, Robert Fiske, and Ken Starr, and there is no secret. There is no conspiracy. There's nothing to tell."

Lisa was not always able to make such assertions. Just a few weeks after Vince died, she was notified that his account at the White House credit union was overdrawn. She had emptied the account, and deposited the money in her own account in Arkansas, but Bill Kennedy called her and said that Vince's account hadn't had as much money in it as Lisa thought. He had been told, he said, that Vince had made several large cash withdrawals, of several thousand dollars each, from the account. "I went berserk," Lisa says. "I said, 'I don't know anything about that.' And I thought, God, what if he was being blackmailed, or maybe he had a girlfriend in some apartment somewhere, and I didn't know about it. My mind was just racing." Lisa says that she searched her records from the credit union and found the receipts from Vince's automatic withdrawals, and discovered a mistake—thirty-five-dollar withdrawals had been misread as thirty-five-hundred-dollar withdrawals. "But it upset me so much I virtually could not see," she says. "I thought I was going to faint."

One of her sisters came over, and she called another sister. Together, the next day, they took Lisa to a psychiatrist. She has been seeing him ever since. In therapy, she began working out answers to some of the remaining questions



"I thought I saw you by the lake this morning, but it was a stick."

about Vince's death, such as why he hadn't left a suicide note. "Do you know that about ninety per cent of suicides do not leave notes?" she says. "People who commit suicide don't want anybody to know they're going to do it. I mean, why do you think he went to Fort Marcy Park? If he'd wanted to hurt me or the President, he'd have done it right in front of our noses. But we'd have tried to stop him."

In December of 1993, her first Christmas without Vince, she was home alone and received a call from her Washington attorney. He told her that "A Current Affair," a tabloid TV show, was about to broadcast a rumor that he knew would upset her—allegations by Arkansas state troopers that Vince and Hillary Clinton had had an affair. Once again, Lisa broke down. She left her house, sobbing, and walked three blocks to a Catholic seminary, and there she sat beneath a statue of the Blessed Mother. "I cried my eyes out for forty-five minutes," she recalls. "I thought, This is more than I can take." But she then resolved not to be defeated by doubt, or even by grief. She thought about teaching math, something she had started doing before the family left Arkansas, and she went home to keep a tutoring appointment. This year, she started teaching math part time at a private school in Little Rock.

She had dealt with the Hillary question before, and so had Vince. The rumors of an affair first circulated during the 1992 campaign, when Bill Clinton was besieged by allegations of infidelity. Vince gathered the family and told them that the rumor about him and Hillary was false. "They're going to say that we had an affair," Vince said. "I don't see why I can't be friends with a woman at work without somebody assuming we had an affair."

Lisa says that she accepts Vince's statement. "One reason I believe that there's nothing to it is the way he treated me. I mean, I just don't think somebody is a loving husband and treats me the way he would treat me if he's having an affair, whether it's with Hillary or with anybody else. And the second reason is, I don't think Hillary would do it. I mean, she's the mother of Chelsea, and there's Bill. The type of friendship she and Vince had was not a romantic one. I think professionally he was very close to

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SHOWCASE

UNSEEN STIEGLITZ

If "Alfred Stieglitz at Lake George," which opens next week at the Museum of Modern Art, were nothing more than another tribute to the photographer, it would hardly be cause for celebration. Stieglitz believed himself to be the center of the universe, and he has often been dealt with as if he were right. He has been quoted, misquoted, memorialized, romanticized, mythologized, criticized, and worshipped ad nauseam. Even though his reputation is based on a relatively small body of his photographs—including "The Steerage" (1907), his shot of poor passengers on a transatlantic ship; the dramatic pictures of Manhattan architecture; the cloud photographs; and the famous portraits of his wife, Georgia O'Keeffe—those pictures have been endlessly exhibited and reproduced. This familiarity might make one think that there is nothing left to know about the Stieglitz legacy.

As "Alfred Stieglitz at Lake George" proves, this is not true. Nearly fifty of the ninety-three images in the exhibition are being shown for the first time. It's a coup for John Szarkowski, the former director of MOMA's department of photography and the curator of the show, who began this project more than a decade ago. After Stieglitz died, in 1946, O'Keeffe gave a master set of his prints to the National Gallery, in Washington, D.C., but this archive has remained largely inaccessible as a result of the extreme stipulations that she imposed on the gift. In 1983, Szarkowski wrote to O'Keeffe and asked for permission to exhibit Stieglitz's late work, half expecting the customary long silence, followed by a "No." Instead, she said yes, and because she had given her blessing the decision was honored after her death, in 1986. Szarkowski gathered additional rare Stieglitz prints from the Art Institute of Chicago, the Getty Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and other institutions. When Szarkowski loves a project, there's no one more keen at organizing and presenting photographic images.

For much of his career, Stieglitz's work as a photographer came second to his efforts to introduce, champion, and sell modern art to America. He was often too busy running his legendary 291 Gallery and being the messiah of his medium to take pictures, and he tended to publicize that portion of his work which he thought represented his various theories of photography. These images are skillful, but there is often a formality, an emphasis on traditional conventions of composition, that holds the work back: some of it is too involved with proving it is art to actually *be* art. The news that Szarkowski's show brings is that Stieglitz was capable of spontaneity, lightness, and even humor.

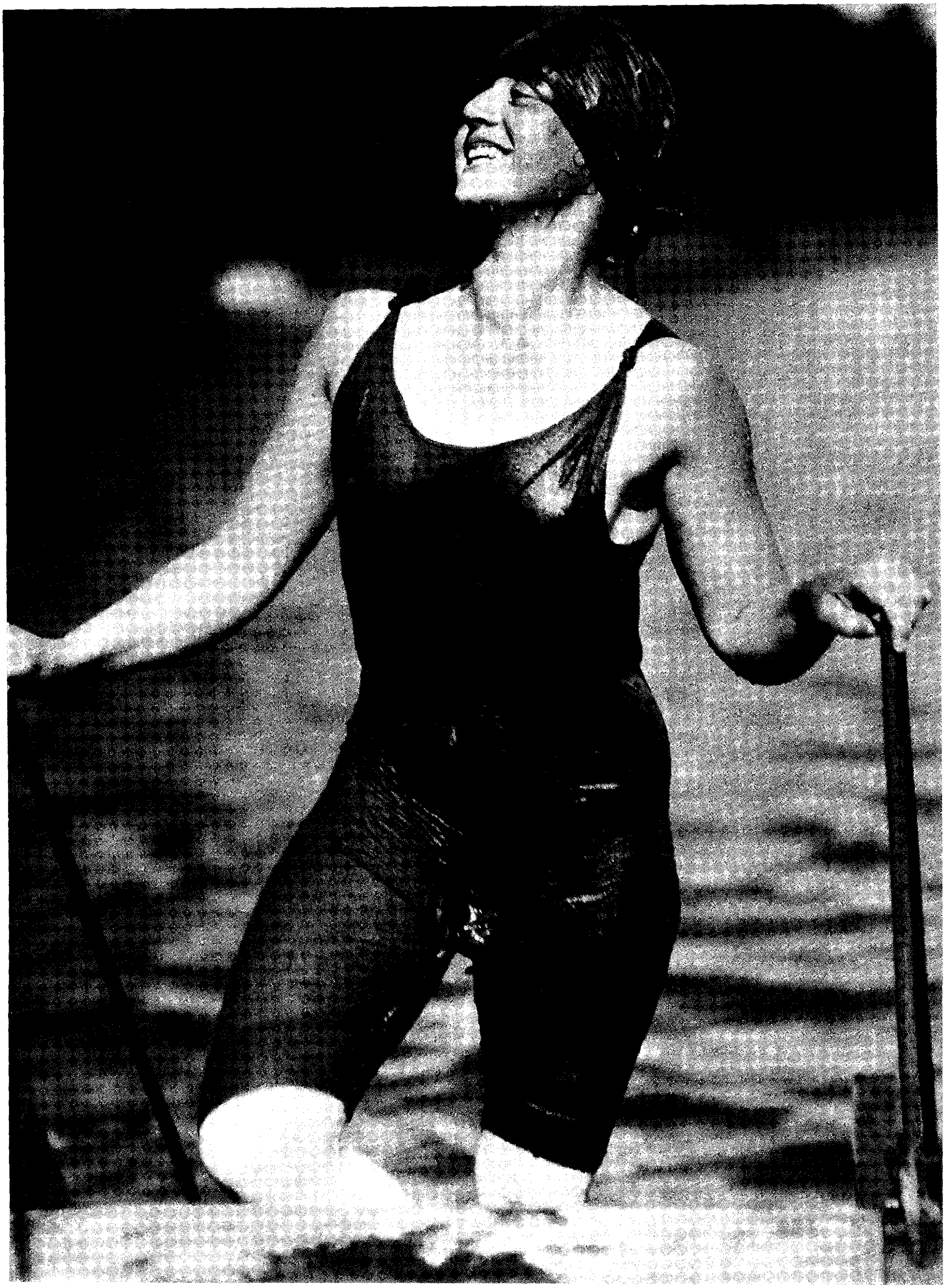
All the photographs in the MOMA exhibition were taken at Stieglitz's country home near the shore of Lake George, in upstate New York, between 1914 and 1936. At the start of this period, his gallery and his magazine, *Camera Work*, were on their last legs, and these and other failures had Stieglitz spending more time at his rural retreat. There the grand man of photography let his hair down. He took shots of his buddies goofing off, and he captured O'Keeffe looking as if she actually laughed. (In other shots, the look in her eye suggests that she sometimes couldn't wait to get out of his clutches.) Occasionally, his subjects seem to be thinking, You're a real nut job with that goddam camera of yours. A number of the landscapes we've never seen before are startlingly immediate, particularly a series he took during the snowy winter of 1923. And there are remarkable pictures of women—women so full-blooded and alive that they seem to burst out of the past and into the present. The nudes of Paul Strand's wife, Rebecca, and a series showing Ellen Koeniger in a clinging wet bathing suit have the dynamism of a home movie and more than a hint of the sharpness of Stieglitz's sexual appetite.

These wide-world images encourage one to look afresh at the familiar pictures in the show and see them breathe again. Stieglitz, up there in the pantheon, should join us in thanking his curator for saving him from himself.—INGRID SISCHY

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED STIEGLITZ

Ellen Koeniger, Lake George, 1916.

COURTESY NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, ALFRED STIEGLITZ COLLECTION, © 1995 THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART



her. I think he had a great deal of respect for her and for her mind. I think in a lot of ways he felt sort of protective of her, like when they lost a case. I just think that they were close friends."

She says that she considers Hillary a friend, but that she and Hillary have not discussed the issue of the alleged affair. "I mean, would you expect her to deny it? What good does denying do? It only elevates the accusation to some level of credibility and gives it some respect that it's not due."

In the end, Lisa says, she has come to her own accommodation with this and the other speculations about her late husband. "There were certain things I know, because I was there, and there are some things I don't know—that I can never prove one way or the other, except by faith. I just have faith in Vince and faith in Hillary that they did not have an affair. If they did, who cares now? You know? Who cares? I sincerely believe that they didn't. But that doesn't matter to me—Vince is dead. It does matter to me that they're using him. I know that he didn't do anything dishonest, out of line, or as ridiculous as laundering money or bank accounts."

After the "Current Affair" broadcast, Lisa told her psychiatrist that she was still shaken by it. "I said, 'This is just outrageous. I can't believe that on top of losing Vince I have to deal with this.' " The doctor suggested that she try Prozac. The antidepressant gave her an understanding, for the first time, of Vince and his illness. "That's when I realized that it was a disease," she says. "Vince was just down, worn out, depressed. Lack of serotonin. He was just totally depleted. Prozac would have helped him sleep, cope, get up in the morning—deal with things without feeling such despair."

BOULANGERIE
EURO-TRASH

The course of Vince's depression, obscure to her even in the face of stark warnings, suddenly became clear: "Having been so low myself and come out of it, I realized how low he must have been, and how he didn't have help. I had a lot of help to get me out of it—psychiatrists and doctors and lawyers and priests and nuns and friends, everybody at every turn helping me."

Lisa believes that she has arrived at an answer to the most baffling question about Vince's last day. After he had a cheeseburger, French fries, and a Coke in his office, he walked out carrying his suit jacket, and said to one of the secretaries, "I'll be back." That was at 1 P.M. His body was found in Fort Marcy Park, in suburban Virginia, at 5:45 P.M. Where had he been during those unaccounted-for hours?

Lisa thinks that when Vince went to the White House parking lot, climbed into their car, and drove off, he may have had the gun with him but was not certain that he would kill himself. "I think he probably spent those three or four hours driving around trying to decide." She believes that Vince suddenly "flooded"—that his problems came rushing upon him, magnifying his despair. "I imagine that Vince was driving around and the thought of going back to the White House—it just made him claustrophobic. I think he was on his way to a nervous breakdown. I think he was just holding himself together."

Her children, she says, will have to reach their own understanding of their father's death. Vincent, who is selling securities in Atlanta, and Brugh, who is entering his sophomore year in college, have occasionally suspected that there is something they still don't know about their father's suicide. But Laura, like Lisa, has found some solace in the diagnosis of depression. "I think it made it easier," Laura says. "It's a whole lot easier seeing him as sick and having a chemical imbalance than to feel 'Oh, my God, he did this and he knew what

A GREEN CRAB'S SHELL

Not, exactly, green:
closer to bronze
preserved in kind brine,

something retrieved
from a Greco-Roman wreck,
patinated and oddly

muscular. We cannot
know what his fantastic
legs were like—

though evidence
suggests eight
complexly folded

scuttling works
of armament, crowned
by the foreclaws'

gesture of menace
and power. A gull's
gobbled the center,

leaving this chamber
—size of a demitasse—
open to reveal

a shocking, Giotto blue.
Though it smells
of seaweed and ruin,

this little travelling case
comes with such lavish lining!
Imagine breathing

surrounded by
the brilliant rinse
of summer's firmament.

What color is
the underside of skin?
Not so bad, to die,

if we could be opened
into *this*—
if the smallest chambers

of ourselves,
similarly,
revealed some sky.

—MARK DOTY

he was doing.' It's easier to say it wasn't his fault."

ONE day last month, Lisa says, she quietly returned to Washington and thought, God, this place is pretty. Why did I never notice it?

The town had not changed in her absence. That very week, the former Justice Department official Philip Heymann was testifying before the Senate Whitewater panel, saying he had warned Nussbaum two days after Vincent's death that it would be a "terrible mistake" to keep investigators from going through the papers in Vince's office. On the other side of the Capitol, a House committee was gearing up for its own Whitewater examination. The next week saw the birth of a new speculation about Vince Foster—the assertion, in a New York *Post* column, that he killed himself in the White House parking lot, not in Fort Marcy Park.

But, unlikely as it must once have seemed to Lisa, Washington was about to make her happy. She had returned to town for Senate confirmation hearings on the appointment to the federal bench of a Little Rock lawyer named Jim Moody. The Senate Judiciary Committee approved Moody's appointment without dissent, followed by confirmation from the full Senate. Moody is a former colleague of President Clinton's, and he and Lisa plan to marry at the end of this year.

Lisa and Vince had known Jim and his wife, Jo Ann, but the couples had not been close friends, and didn't see each other often. The Moodys came to Vince's burial service, and Lisa saw them there. She was shocked to hear a few months later that Jo Ann had died suddenly in her sleep. As Lisa began to get well, she started dating, and Moody—a man who, like Vince, had a high reputation—was one of those who called on her. They were comfortable together, his circle was her circle, and Lisa realized that she was enjoying herself again. When Jim asked her to marry him, she did not hesitate to say yes.

By then, Lisa had nearly completed a remarkable, if unsought, transformation from the woman who was once utterly content with a Junior League and country-club existence into one who had faced—and faced down—a horrible nightmare. But she remains Lisa Foster, not Hillary Clinton: she is someone who has spent her life wanting to be, and being, someone's wife. That is her identity. When I asked her if she surprised herself at all by planning a new marriage, she said no, she is surprised only at having fallen in love again.

She and Jim plan to live in her house—Vince's house—when they are married. Sometimes Lisa looks up and sees Vince. ("I was out there weeding and I looked over and saw him standing there," she says. "I still see him in my bed.") Jim's office will be in a converted garage at the rear of the house, in which the boxes labelled "VWF Personal" are currently scattered around. When I asked Lisa how the children felt about the marriage, she said, "You'll have to ask them."

Laura, who was standing nearby, said, "I think it'd be easier if it weren't the same house." This surprised Lisa. There followed some discussion about bathrooms and about redecorating versus moving. Lisa had the final word. "I have this feeling about some things, and that is, I can't do anything about the fact that Vince is gone," she said. "The only thing I can do is try to make the best of what we have. I have found a wonderful man whom I love and who loves me, and who will be good to my children. And just because it's going to be an adjustment is no reason not to do it. The whole damned thing's been an adjustment. So we will adjust."

Earlier that day, after Lisa's morning tennis at the athletic club, she and I had lunch at Trio's, one of Little Rock's tonier cafés. This is the life she had before Washington, and the life she wants to have again. She knows that it will never be quite the same, because too many of her friends who went to Washington with Bill Clinton came back disgraced, embarrassed, or broken-hearted. She also knows that some might have expected her to remain the grieving widow a little longer. "I don't want to forget Vince, and I don't plan to," she said. "But I do plan on loving whoever's going to be my husband as much as I loved Vince, and being, I hope, a better wife and enjoying whatever life I have. But that is not to take away from Vince. That is more to honor him, as far as I'm concerned." ♦

LETTER FROM ITALY

THE FALL OF CAESAR

As seven-time Prime Minister, Giulio Andreotti personified Italian politics. This month, he faces trial for collusion with the Mafia and is accused of the sanctioning of two murders—and Italy is going on trial with him.

BY ALEXANDER STILLE

IN 1990, the Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti hosted a luncheon for former President Gerald Ford at which he lamented that the United States discarded its leaders too hastily. Andreotti had reason to pity his old friend. Since losing the 1976 election, Ford had been working on his golf game, while Andreotti remained at the center of power, as he had throughout his nearly fifty-year career. Indeed, Andreotti was the living symbol of the Christian Democratic Party's seemingly permanent grip on power. He had been in the Cabinet of the first postwar government, in 1947, and had occupied virtually every important post since then: Minister of Finance, Budget, Industry, Defense, Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Prime Minister a record seven times. Commentators called him the Eternal Giulio, or even Giulio the God, linking him to that other great Roman politician, Julius Caesar.

Now Andreotti—a man who has dealt on equal terms with world leaders like de Gaulle, Eisenhower, Thatcher, Mitterrand, Reagan, and Gorbachev—stands accused of collusion with the Sicilian Mafia. Prosecutors in Palermo and Perugia claim that for more than twenty years Andreotti used his power to fix organized-crime cases and met with Mafia bosses, and that he commissioned—or, at least, consented to—two murders. Andreotti insists that the charges are absurd—that they are the Mafia's vendetta for his government's firm stand against crime. Rather than dismissing them, however, a Palermo judge has ruled that Andreotti must stand trial, in a case set to begin at the end of September.

Perhaps no Western leader has fallen so low from such a height since the former United States Vice-President Aaron Burr stood trial for treason. The closest recent parallel may be the case of the East German leader Erich Honecker, who was charged with the crimes of the Communist regime. Indeed, by prosecuting Andreotti the Sicilian magistrates are effectively placing Italy's entire postwar political order on trial. "Given the length and centrality of his career, the Italian Republic itself is in the defendant's docket," says Giuliano Ferrara, who is a member of Parliament and was a minister in the recent center-right government. "The trial of Andreotti is the trial of our own history."

Andreotti's half-century career contains all the contradictions of modern Italian life. His Christian Democratic Party, the Democrazia Cristiana (D.C.), helped rebuild Italy after the war and deftly steered the country between the Scylla and Charybdis of Fascism and Communism, but in order to do so it developed a corrupt patronage system that eventually caused its own downfall. Andreotti has been a close friend of almost every recent Pope, but he also has a history of associating with the kind of people who would wind up on a Ten Most Wanted list. Nevertheless, in a nation that has generally admired shrewdness more than strict moral probity, opinion polls continued until the early nineties to show that Andreotti was Italy's most respected politician.

Andreotti is in many ways a tragic figure. A man of enormous intelligence and learning, he might, if he had lived in an earlier century, when Italy was the center of Europe, have gone down in history as one of the great statesmen of his age. Instead, it is his peculiar destiny to have been a giant figure on a small stage. And it is his misfortune to have begun his career in a world marked by political corruption and intrigue and to have finished it in an era when Italy has suddenly begun to hold its leaders to a higher ethical standard.

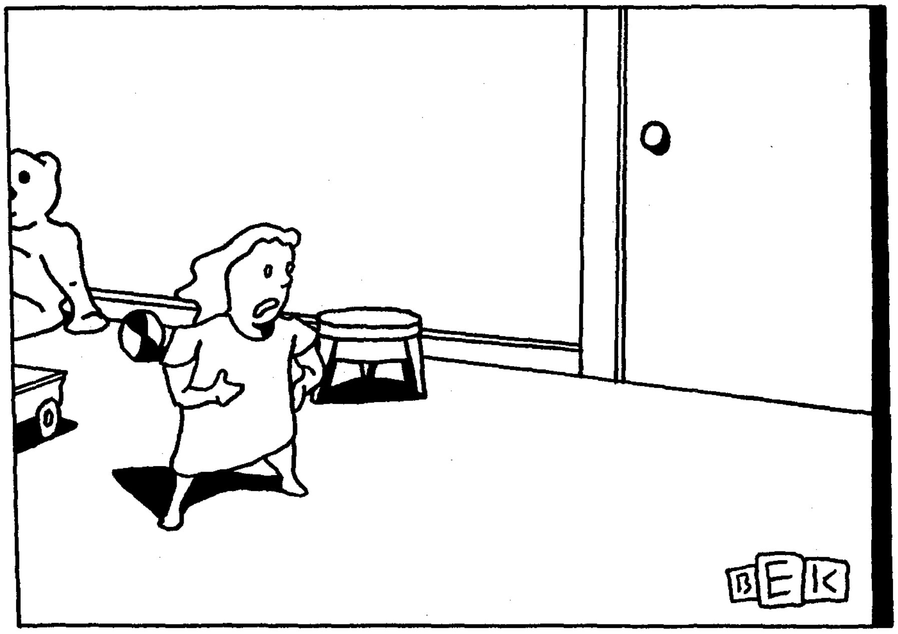
WHEN I arranged to interview Andreotti earlier this year, I was warned by several people that I would find him greatly altered—a shadow of his former self. But when I saw him, in his frescoed Senate offices in Rome's Palazzo Giustiniani (Andreotti still holds an honorary post as a Senator for Life), he seemed remarkably unchanged. His hair, which he wears slicked back, is still almost raven black, in stark contrast to the white and waxen skin of his face. His physique is frail, with narrow, stooped shoulders that have led many to think of him as a hunchback; his pointy, almost triangular ears stick straight out, like a bat's. His sober dark suit, thick black-framed glasses, and grave, formal manner have always given him the look of a priest or an undertaker. Those who knew him in high school say that as a teen-ager he looked exactly the way he does now: back then, he appeared prematurely middle-aged, and now, at seventy-six, he seems much younger than he is. His distinctive appearance has made him a favorite figure of Italian political cartoonists, who have often depicted him as a kind of Prince of Darkness or Count Dracula. Unlike many Italian politicians, who make irate phone calls to newspaper editors or file libel suits with regularity, Andreotti has always accepted satire and criticism with Olympian calm and good humor.

His mind appeared razor-sharp, and his manner was cool and unflappable as he patiently answered (or ably dodged) question after question for three straight hours, on subjects ranging from Italian history and politics to the gravest charges in the current Mafia case. His manners

STEVEN DANA; POPE PHOTOS: SYGMA; ALL OTHERS: GAMMA LIAISON

la Repubblica

Andreotti, a friend of Popes and of some of Italy's most-wanted, surrounded by the Pontiff, Mafia capo Totò Riina, and Andreotti's murdered ally, Salvatore Lima.



"Where were you when I needed an imaginary friend?"

are simple; he has little of the pomposity and arrogance of some of his colleagues. He freely admitted, however, that he had regained his current equilibrium only after a deep personal crisis, which began when the Mafia charges first surfaced, two years ago. In fact, when I saw him around that time, in the course of researching a book on the Italian war against the Mafia, he had seemed disoriented and off balance under questioning about the allegations against him. "I suffered a kind of nervous exhaustion, and I was really afraid I might go insane—it was as if a nightmare had suddenly closed in on me," he said. "Then I found a new doctor, who helped me a great deal, making it easier to sleep. And my religion is of great comfort. Everything considered, I have been very fortunate in life—I've experienced glory and red carpets—and I think that in order to merit the next life one must undergo a severe trial. I would rather have had a trial of a different nature. But I believe in the justice of the afterlife and not just on earth, and that gives me a lot of serenity."

Andreotti has never had a reputation for extravagant personal tastes. Throughout his long career, including the frequent stints as Prime Minister, he has continued to live in the same apartment, on Corso Vittorio Emanuele, with his wife, Livia. He rises early, goes to Mass at his local church at 6 A.M., and works a long day. Only one personal habit betrays his more worldly side: he is a lover of horse racing. He has always been an assiduous devotee of the track, and has even owned racehorses.

Americans admire politicians who appear to stand for something and stick to it: for instance, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. The one American politician who would have fit into Italian life, Richard Nixon, was hounded out of office. But Andreotti comes from a profoundly different political culture—a world of murky compromise and intentional obscurantism, a bizarre mixture of holy water and ruthless realpolitik, closer in spirit to the Papal Rome of Cesare Borgia and Cardinal Mazarin than to the moralistic world of American politics.

Until recently, Andreotti's sinister reputation was actually part of his popular appeal. Over the years, I can recall Italians saying with a mixture of horror and pride, "He's behind everything, but he's so smart he never gets caught!" There was even a song that went:

> Who stole the cake? Andreotti.
> Who made the stock market drop?
> Andreotti.
> Who's behind the Mafia? Andreotti.

Andreotti reacted to this kind of jab with a shrug. "Aside from the Punic Wars, which I was too young for, I have been blamed for everything," he would joke. He even appeared to cultivate his tenebrous image, through clever expressions of world-weary cynicism. "Power is a disease one has no desire to be cured of," he once said. "I hope to live until I'm a hundred and one, so that I will have time to accomplish other good actions and repent for my sins." Andreotti's irony evidently made a poor impression on the high-minded but somewhat humorless Lady Thatcher, who wrote in her memoir, "He seemed to have a positive aversion to principle, even a conviction that a man of principle was doomed to be a figure of fun." But Thatcher's dismissive remarks may overlook the possibility that Andreotti's cynicism is actually part of his very different religious world view. Andreotti "belongs to a certain Jesuitical, clerical tradition in which you accept that in a fallen world you have to work with the material at hand," Gerardo Bianco, another old parliamentary colleague of Andreotti's, told me a few years ago. "He is a genuinely religious and even charitable man, but he has a pessimistic view of human nature and of original sin that allows him to tolerate the presence of people of dubious reputation."

GIULIO ANDREOTTI was born in Rome in 1919, the youngest of three children. He lost his father at the age of two and was raised by his mother and her family. Growing up in Rome, which has seen the greatest glories, follies, and depravities of man come and go, shaped his vision of life. "The history of the city through the centuries, with its endless string of events, which contains everything and the reverse of everything, makes it difficult to shock or surprise a Roman," Andreotti says. An aunt taught him what he has described as "the old Catholic wisdom of the Roman people: never overdramatize things; everything, over time, can be fixed; keep a certain detachment from everything; the important things in life are very few." While some people see his detachment as profound cynicism, Andreotti says, "I see it as a positive thing; it keeps you from overreacting."

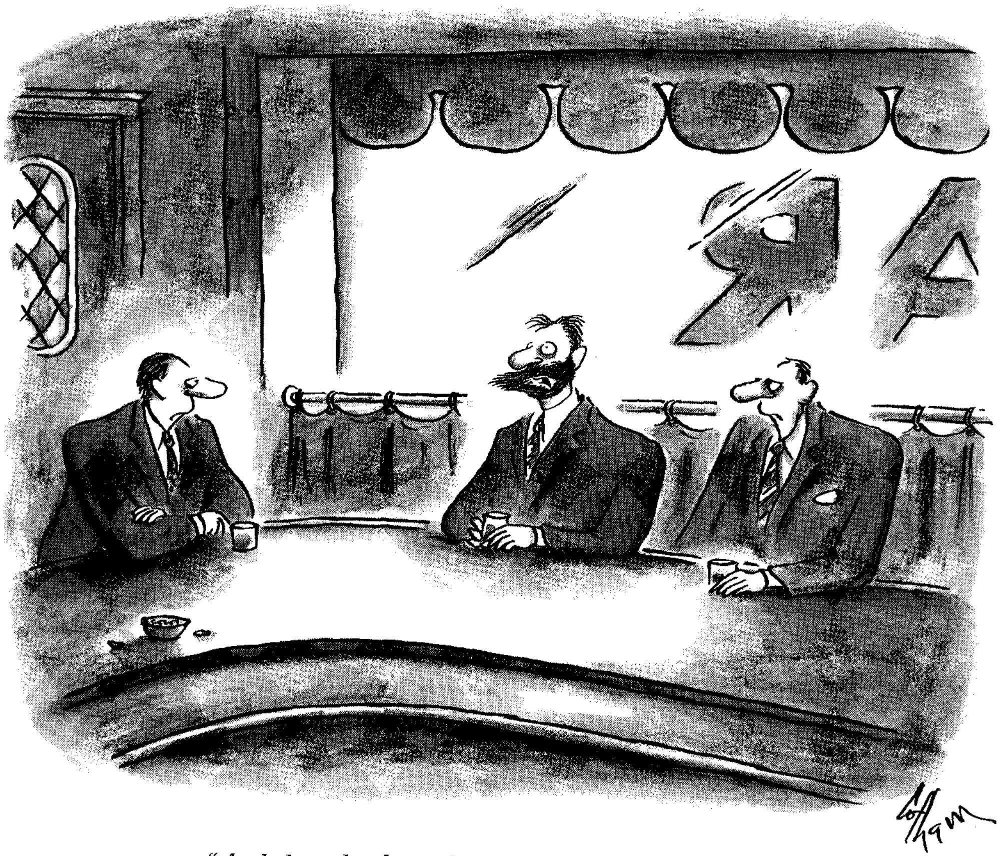
His cold, distant attitude may be due in part to the extreme austerity of his childhood. His mother squeezed by on a small pension in an unheated apartment, and Andreotti once admitted in an interview that he could not recall her ever having kissed him. Andreotti became an altar boy and, showing an early sign of his political skill, organized the duties of all the other altar boys.

He got his start in political life as the protégé of Alcide De Gasperi, an old Catholic politician who had waited out the twenty-year reign of Fascism by working in the Vatican library. As a university student, Andreotti went to look for a book on the history of the Papal Navy. "Haven't you got anything better to do?" he was asked by the old librarian—De Gasperi, who was busy preparing the new Christian Democratic Party, which would govern Italy after the war ended. Andreotti became De Gasperi's right-hand man.

In the new, Catholic party, whose many leaders had vague and confused ideas and little practical experience, Andreotti rose rapidly to the top, because he showed a remarkable ability to cut straight to the heart of problems and solve them. He had an astonishing grasp of detail, a mastery of parliamentary procedure, tact, and discretion, and a surprising toughness in dealing with internal party politics. De Gasperi was made Prime Minister in the provisional postwar government in 1945, and Andreotti became his chief of staff in 1947, a Cabinet member at the age of twenty-eight. (Andreotti wept at his good fortune, one of only three times he can recall having cried in his entire life. The others were when De Gasperi died, in 1954, and at his own mother's death, in 1976.)

The Italian journalist Indro Montanelli once wrote, "When De Gasperi and Andreotti went to church together, De Gasperi talked to God, while Andreotti talked to the priest." During that period, priests openly solicited votes for the Christian Democrats in order to ward off the Communist threat. To understand Andreotti and the Christian Democrats, it is essential to remember that the Party was born out of the ashes of the war. The country was literally in ruins, and Fascists and Communists, on the verge of civil war for many years, kept their guns well oiled beneath their beds. "De Gasperi was against exacerbating conflict," Andreotti says. "He taught us to search for compromise, to mediate." To keep any one party from growing too strong, De Gasperi favored a proportional political system, which led to the creation of at least a dozen different parties. While this system did prevent the return of dictatorship, it made strong, stable government virtually impossible and led to the kind of revolving-door administrations that have characterized Italian life ever since. In this world of constant compromise and negotiation, politics was not so much a matter of formulating and executing programs as an endless process of horse-trading, patching together and maintaining fragile alliances, and dividing up the spoils of government. The climate of eternal emergency brought about by collapsing governments meant that expediency almost always won out over principle, as crucial votes were traded for key ministerial jobs, bank presidencies, and pork-barrel projects. De Gasperi was well aware of the risks of this system. When another Christian Democratic leader suggested an Anglo-American majoritarian system, he replied, "In an ideal world, you would be right: if we were making a shoe for the foot of Apollo, then we would need to make a perfect shoe, but we have to make a shoe to fit a gnarled, old foot."

Perhaps more than any other figure, Andreotti was the symbol of the protean nature of the D.C.; he is a political chameleon who has changed colors numerous times. He started out as the leader of the right wing of the Party and, in the nineteen-fifties, bitterly opposed any rapprochement with the Socialist Party. But in the mid-sixties Andreotti served, along with his former adversaries, in the first center-left coalition government. Instead of resisting calls for change, the Christian Democrats were brilliant at coöpting the political opposition and turning it into a force of conservation. And so it was with the Socialists. The D.C. agreed to create a vast social safety net, and then used it to expand the Party's patronage system. The nationalization of industry and the expansion of government services—public-works projects, national health care, wel-



"And then she slapped my face, injuring my beard."

fare benefits, unemployment and disability payments—gave the D.C. much more money and many more jobs to distribute. After a decade of center-left government, the D.C. was still firmly in power, and the Socialists—tarnished by their close association with the government—were in pieces.

Then, in the seventies, it was Andreotti who was called on to manage the so-called Historic Compromise—a government alliance with the arch-enemy itself, the Italian Communist Party. The reasoning, similar to that which led Nixon to go to China, was that only Andreotti, the staunch Cold Warrior, could head up the first Communist-supported government. He flew to the United States to try to explain this unusual arrangement to Italy's alarmed allies in Washington, who were terrified that the Communists would soon triumph. In the end, the move proved another shrewd gamble for the D.C. The Communists failed to change the Christian Democratic system of power; rather, they involuntarily lent their legitimacy to it, and lost much of their own popularity. When Andreotti was asked once by an impertinent critic whether its many years in power had "worn out" the D.C., he replied, "Power wears out those who don't have it."

Even as he was scaling the heights of power, Andreotti never forgot his own local constituents. In a country legendary for its inefficiency, his office was famous for responding to every single request with a punctual, personal reply. In fact, it is difficult to interview someone on the subject of Andreotti who cannot exhibit a handwritten note in his semi-legible scrawl. Andreotti's waiting room was crowded not only with the rich and powerful but also with widows, orphans, and local parish priests who needed help. He used to receive the poor on Sunday afternoons and—in a characteristic mixture of Christian charity and shrewd electioneering—distributed cheese, pasta, and salami. His personal power was an enormous boon for his home district in and around Rome, whose surrounding countryside became the site of innumerable businesses, factories, and public-works projects. For decades, Andreotti collected more votes than virtually any other Italian politician. A farmer in his district is said to have exacted two promises from his family on his deathbed: "Don't sell the land, and vote for Andreotti."

Power, however, has its costs. Graft and illegal campaign contributions have been the lifeblood of Italy's political system. All the governing parties—and the major factions within each party—accepted under-the-table payments from entrepreneurs who did business with the government. But while each of the principal party leaders had his bagmen, most of them also surrounded themselves with figures of some intellectual and political stature. "Andreotti's people, on the other hand, were always the dregs," says one former Christian Democratic member of Parliament, who preferred not to be quoted by name.

The Christian Democratic Party was always divided into four or five principal factions, which competed against one another almost as ferociously as the D.C. did against other parties. Andreotti's personal faction was a veritable Foreign Legion of political adventurers, including former Fascists, an ex-boxer, and several people who had run afoul of the law. For a number of years, the Rome machine of the Andreotti faction was run by a former Fascist bullyboy named Vittorio Sbardella, more commonly known as the Shark. Andreotti's man in Naples is facing numerous charges of corruption, bribery, and ties to the Camorra, the Neapolitan version of the Mafia. One of Andreotti's biggest financial backers, Giuseppe Ciarrapico, is a self-confessed Fascist, who candidly acknowledges that he supported Andreotti and the D.C. for his own economic advantage. He has said he skimmed money from public contracts with Andreotti's permission—a charge Andreotti denies.

"We always asked ourselves, 'Why does he always pick the worst people around?' " Andreotti's longtime secretary, Vincenza Gambogi Enea, said in a recent interview in the *Corriere della Sera*. "Always the worst. I think it was almost a habit with him. This man inspired tenderness in us. Because he was always so alone. And because he has done so many good things." She is sure he wasn't involved with the Mafia but does not consider her former boss an angel. Politics "is a dirty business," she pointed out. "There's no such thing as clean politics."

While most factions contained several major leaders and were organized around some particular political position or idea, the Andreotti faction was organized around an individual: Andreotti. "Our faction isn't a dictatorship. It's more than that: it's a theocratic empire, in which one man gives the orders," Franco Evangelisti, Andreotti's right-hand man, proudly declared several years ago. Alter ego, bagman, and court jester, Evangelisti played Falstaff to Andreotti's Henry V for more than forty years. If Andreotti was cold, highly refined, and reserved, Evangelisti was crude, colorful, and full of popular humor and charm.

Evangelisti's outgoing nature got him into serious trouble in 1980, when he admitted in a widely publicized newspaper interview that he had taken under-the-table campaign contributions. At the time, a real-estate mogul close to Andreotti, Gaetano Caltagirone, had gone bankrupt after enjoying seemingly limitless credit from one of Italy's state-owned banks. When Evangelisti was asked whether he had ever taken money from the Caltagirone family, he blithely replied, "Yes, from Gaetano. I am Gaetano Caltagirone's friend. . . . We've known one another for twenty years and every time we saw one another he would ask me, 'Franco, what do you need?' . . . Who thought about any scandal?" When he was asked what the money was for, he said, "To finance the faction. To finance my electoral campaign. To finance the Party." Evangelisti was forced to resign his Cabinet position at the time, but remained a member of Parliament, and the incident never led to a criminal investigation, or even to a parliamentary investigation.

Those who attended Caltagirone's lavish parties recall seeing the anomalous figure of the scholarly, bespectacled Andreotti there, dressed in his sober, dark uniform, sitting, amused and impassive, among tycoons, starlets, bodyguards, and paparazzi, and looking on at the vulgar pageant of humanity from an infinitely ironic distance. When Andreotti was once asked about his questionable company, he was quoted as saying, "Trees need manure in order to grow."

"The worldly imperturbability of Andreotti . . . is not just lack of principle.

It is something worse, much worse for a lay person: it is the Catholic, clerical ability to separate religion from what Pope Paul VI called 'the world,' " the Italian journalist Giorgio Bocca wrote a few years ago. As Italy's former President Francesco Cossiga has put it, "Andreotti believes in God—the problem is that he believes only in God."

When I was in Palermo recently, I went to see Giuseppe Alessi, a ninety-one-year-old Sicilian lawyer who is uniquely qualified to describe the obscure origins of the relations between the Mafia and politics. He was one of the founding members of the Christian Democratic Party in Sicily and one of the first presidents of the regional Sicilian parliament created after the war. He has come to the defense of Andreotti, out of disgust for what he regards as the infamy of the charges against the former Prime Minister. This move is of considerable interest, because over the years Alessi and Andreotti were often at odds politically. Alessi was a member of the reform wing of the D.C., which felt that the Party was betraying its Catholic ideals in making the kind of compromises that Andreotti was famous for. Although Alessi defends Andreotti with great passion, he would make a useful prosecution witness in testifying about the Christian Democratic Party's decision to turn a blind eye to the obvious Mafia infiltration of the Party in the late forties. The Mafia, which had been brutally suppressed during Fascism, initially backed the cause of Sicilian separatism, then shifted to the D.C.

"I'm tired of being sensitive. I want to be an oaf again."

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"It happened this way: Some people in the Christian Democratic Party approached the separatists, whose backbone were these *capi-Mafia*"—Mafia bosses—"and invited them to join the national parties," Alessi told me. "The Mafiosi were looking for the road to power, to secure the support they needed for their economic affairs. If the mayor was Republican, they became Republican, if he was Socialist, they were Socialist, and if he was Christian Democrat they became Christian Democrat." Although at that time Alessi was an outspoken opponent of these local pacts with the Devil, he now defends them as a necessary evil of the Cold War period. "The Democrazia Cristiana subordinated its own ideals for a supreme interest of national importance: saving the democratic state. The victory of Communism would have meant that Italy ended up behind the Iron Curtain, and if Italy fell France and Spain would fall."

But Alessi's justification of his party's dealings with the Mafia is based on a Robin Hood view of the Mafia of the nineteen-forties and fifties. "They weren't criminals. They were local potentates, neighborhood bosses, proud men, men of prestige. Their crimes were basically economic—fraud, forgery, illegal appropriation of property—but they disliked real crime." When I pointed out that even during the forties the Mafia killed numerous people who threatened their interests, including dozens of labor-union organizers and left-wing politicians, Alessi said, "Those were punitive killings that the *capi-Mafia* had no hand in. Maybe the boss would complain, 'There's no more peace in this town, because So-and-So is making trouble.' And some young tough, in order to gain some standing, would eliminate that person."

It may perhaps have been possible to think of the Mafia in the nineteen-fifties in folklorist terms, as a form of primitive justice in remote rural areas. But by the late nineteen-sixties, when Andreotti's faction expanded to Sicily, the Mafia had shown itself to be a much more dynamic form of modern gangsterism. There were at least eighty-eight Mafia killings in Sicily between 1960 and 1963, during the real-estate boom known as the Sack of Palermo. This bonanza destroyed Palermo's urban fabric and enriched the city's Mafia clans, which began to fight for control of the lucrative building trade. But protests over the killings in Palermo fell on deaf ears in Rome, where many Christian Democrats continued to maintain that the Mafia did not exist. Then, in the summer of 1963, seven carabinieri were killed by a car bomb apparently meant for a Mafia boss, provoking a national scandal and a major crackdown.

The mayor of Palermo during this period, Salvatore Lima, was to become Andreotti's man in Sicily. In an investigation in 1964, Lima was forced to acknowledge that he knew Angelo La Barbera, the boss of one of Palermo's main Mafia families. And a local businessman testified that in order to obtain a zoning variance he had paid a substantial bribe to Lima, which was administered through the Mafia boss Tommaso Buscetta. In its final report, the Parliament's anti-Mafia commission mentioned Lima a hundred and forty-nine times and described him as one of the pillars of Mafia power in Palermo.

None of this, however, jeopardized Lima's standing within the Christian Democratic Party. On the contrary, he was triumphantly elected to Parliament, suddenly surpassing established politicians as the top vote-getter in Sicily. The curious thing is that Lima, who was a man of few words, hardly ever spoke in public. The votes just materialized at election time, as if by magic. An Italian politician from Rome who saw Lima in Palermo was astonished by the relationship between a Sicilian potentate and his electorate. When Lima walked into a local café, people would stand up immediately, in an automatic reflex of respect for a man of power.

Upon arriving in Rome in 1968, Lima decided to switch factions within the Christian Democratic Party, the way a powerful free-agent baseball player decides to change teams. His decision to leave the left wing for Andreotti's conservative faction—a deal brokered by Evangelisti—was not based on a political affinity; it was a pure power alliance. Andreotti, for his part, chose to overlook the rumors and accusations about Lima's ties to the Mafia in Palermo. "There are always polemics in Sicily—this person is a mafioso, that one is not a mafioso," Andreotti told me. "I've always been very cautious about all this." His caution may

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ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

PHILIP JOHNSON'S MONSTA

PHILIP JOHNSON, who often says he is his own best client, has proved his point again. At eighty-nine, he has just finished building the seventh (and, he says, final) structure on his property in New Canaan, Connecticut, and it may be as revolutionary as the famous Glass House that he built there nearly fifty years ago. The all-concrete, blood-red-and-black Monsta, as he calls it, looks more like a sculpture than like a house. Its weird, hallucinatory contours mark a radical departure in his work, and nothing could please him more.

"The idea for this house has been coming for a long time," he said last week. "It's non-Euclidean, and that's the most important thing I can say about it. In other words, it's full of change and life and everything but straight lines. It's all intuitive. All wiggly. It hasn't any back and front and sides.

"I haven't invented a new architecture. Nothing comes from nothing, and I copy everybody. The ancestors of this building are very amusing. One of them is Hermann Finsterlin, a German Expressionist, who designed things that he called houses, without any angles, but they were jokes. Frederick Kiesler's Endless House is another. Also, Frank Gehry, Peter Eisenman, and especially Frank Stella, who's become an architect now, you know. And a lot of kids, thirty-year-olds. It's a sort of touchy-feely architecture. I don't know how to describe it, and I'm glad I don't, because then I'd give it a silly name, like deconstructivism. The point is, I had the money to build the first one."

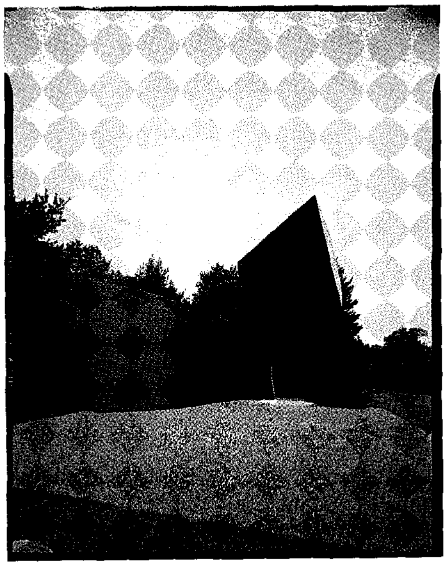
The money came from an endowment that Johnson set up at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which gets the whole Johnsonian compound when he dies. "They wanted to have a visitors' center, and asked if I would build it." He walked over and put his hand on a red wall that soars upward like a ship's prow. "Every time I see this house, I pet it," he said, slapping it affectionately. "It's not a house—it's a body. Why are people so beautiful and buildings so ugly? Everybody wants to touch this one." He slapped the wall three or four more times. "Good boy. Good Monsta," he said.

"These forms are now possible, thanks to the computer. Otherwise, how would you build them? Where is that corner? The computer tells you where it is. It's all concrete, sprayed onto a mesh, like a swimming pool. Inside the mesh are four-by-twenty-foot insulation panels, which can be bent. In a week, it all snapped together."

We went inside, through the eccentrically shaped glass door. "Sh-h-h," he warned. "You have to keep your voice down, because the acoustics are fantastically bad. But that's cured by people. Six to eighteen people—no problem." The inside is painted a soothing off-white. There are two rooms. One is fitted out with chairs, for viewing a video on Philip Johnson (narrated by Philip Johnson); the other will eventually dispense literature, postcards, and—who knows?—Philip Johnson T-shirts. It's a little like being inside a Surrealist painting. The ceiling is nine feet high in one spot, twenty feet in another. The lighting is set into the floor. "If I didn't hate the term, I'd use the word 'spiritual' in this room," Johnson said. "It's nature that's doing the work here." When I suggested that there might be a whiff of Corbusier in the air, he quickly agreed. "Absolutely. Ronchamp chapel."

For all its antecedents, though, the structure really does look like a new kind of architecture. "This is the beginning of the architecture of the twenty-first century," Johnson said—and immediately unsaid it. "But architects are so vain. I'm not going to claim that."

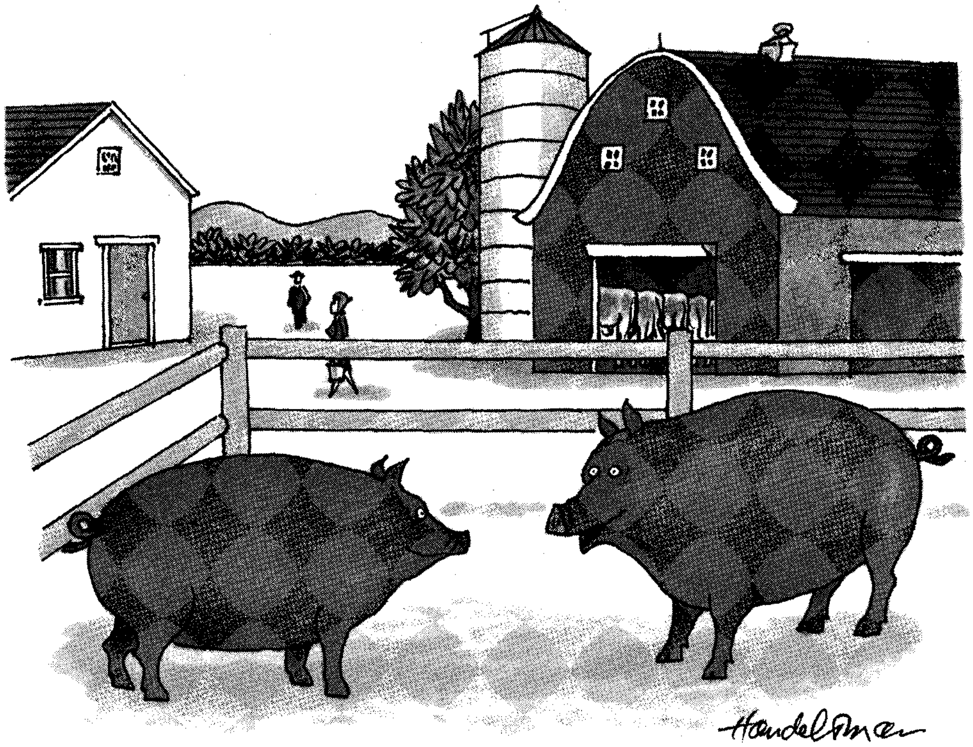
—DODIE KAZANJIAN



The Glass House's new neighbor.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL MORAN

Philip Johnson designs on computer: "My window was wrong, so I moved it. You can change a building while it's going up."



"I really enjoyed my last life. When I spoke, Hollywood trembled."

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have been influenced by Lima's evident value as a political asset. Although Andreotti had a strong electoral base in and around Rome, his faction accounted for only a few percentage points of Party members throughout Italy. Lima, at the height of his power, controlled twenty-five per cent of all Party members in Sicily—one of the most populous regions in Italy. While Andreotti had been an important government minister before his alliance with Lima, his ability to reach the very highest levels of power was related to the transformation of the Andreotti faction into a truly national group.

The deal between Andreotti and Lima worked out for both men. Andreotti became Prime Minister in 1972, and Lima, for a time, held a Cabinet post. Like Andreotti himself, Lima was skillful in brushing off accusations of Mafia ties with witty and learned remarks. "Dante wrote, 'In church with saints and in the tavern with sinners,'" he told reporters once. But he could not shake his reputation of Mafia ties.

In 1974, Andreotti took Lima with him to the Ministry of the Budget, whereupon a distinguished economist, Paolo Sylos Labini, resigned in protest. "Before taking such a drastic step, I attempted to resolve the question through other channels," Professor Labini told prosecutors recently. But when he went to the Party headquarters to see whether the Lima nomination could be withdrawn he was told by the highest authority that "Lima was 'too powerful and dangerous.'" When he tried to raise the Lima issue with Andreotti himself, the Eternal Giulio cut him off, saying that they would discuss it some other time. Andreotti accepted Professor Labini's resignation rather than deprive Lima of his Cabinet post.

Andreotti was not doing anything different from what other Christian Democratic leaders had done before him. By his own admission, he didn't know much about the Mafia and greatly underestimated its power. "I think Andreotti probably saw things this way: the Mafia has always been around, will probably always be around, why shouldn't their votes go to a good cause rather than a bad one?" said one former Christian Democrat who preferred not to be identified. Andreotti denies making any such calculation, but admits that he may have ignored the Mafia problem in that period "to avoid trouble, to make life easier." His decision was consistent with one of the principal tenets of his political philosophy: "See all, tolerate much, correct one thing at a time."

ALTHOUGH Andreotti's relationship with Sicily is extremely important, one must not see it in isolation. Throughout his career, Andreotti, like a chess grandmaster, has played games on several boards simultaneously. But as the Mafia grew immeasurably in strength and wealth through the heroin trade, it increasingly invaded and polluted other spheres of life. Nowhere was this clearer than in the case of the Sicilian banker Michele Sindona, who had been a financier of both the Vatican and the D.C., and at the same time had been laundering money for the Mafia.

In 1974, around the same time that Andreotti appointed Lima as Under-Secretary of the Budget, left-wing terrorism was raging, the Christian Democrats were in danger of being overtaken by the Italian Communists, and they were pushing a difficult, losing referendum to overturn the legalization of divorce. Sindona gave a leading D.C. politician, Amintare Fanfani, a two-and-a-half-million-dollar "loan." Later that year, his international-banking empire went bankrupt amid revelations of widespread fraud.

Under indictment in both Italy and the United States, Sindona tried to use political influence, blackmail, and even threats of violence to force his friends in the Italian government to bail out his failed empire with public money. Then, in 1979, he commissioned an American Mafioso to kill Giorgio Ambrosoli, the Milan lawyer who was overseeing the liquidation of the Sindona banks.

Before he was killed, Ambrosoli received a series of threatening phone calls, and he dutifully recorded them. One included a chilling reference to Andreotti:

> KILLER: They're pointing the finger at you. I'm in Rome and they're pointing the finger, because you're not coöperating. The Big Boss and the little boss, everyone is blaming you. . . . You're a nice guy, I'd be sorry. . . . The Big One, you understand? Yes or no?

Ambrosoli: I imagine the Big One is Sindona.

Killer: No, it's Andreotti!

Ambrosoli: Who? Andreotti!

Killer: Right. He called and said he had everything taken care of, but it's all your fault. . . . So watch out.

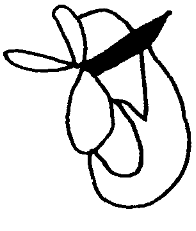
While these claims may have been invented to frighten Ambrosoli, Sindona and his entourage had reason to believe that Prime Minister Andreotti was in their corner. The prosecutors who indicted Sindona for the murder in 1984 wrote, "Without Andreotti and the protection he gave to Sindona between 1974 and 1979, the Ambrosoli murder would never have taken place."

Until recently, Andreotti was able to discard these accusations with a joke or two: "Those who want to harm me see what they want to see. Take the Sindona case. No one remarks on the fact that I've met Mother Teresa of Calcutta many more times than the banker." Now that he can no longer afford such a cavalier attitude, Andreotti is attempting a more serious line of defense. "The career of Sindona has two parts," he told me. "Up until 1974, he was widely revered in the United States as well as in Italy. Then the second Sindona was revealed to us, with his relations with the Mafia . . . and his rather mysterious death." In 1986, after having been convicted of the murder of Ambrosoli, Sindona drank a cup of poisoned coffee in his jail cell, and it remains unclear whether his death was a murder or a suicide.

Even after 1974, when the fraudulent nature of Sindona's empire had become well known, Andreotti went to extraordinary lengths to bail the failed banker out of trouble. Against the advice of virtually all competent banking professionals, he continued to push a public rescue of Sindona's banks which would have cost the Italian treasury hundreds of millions of dollars. Andreotti maintains that he was only trying to save a major Italian business, but during this same period the top officials of the Bank of Italy refused to meet with Sindona's emissaries, because he was a thoroughly discredited figure. In 1984, there was a strong movement to force Andreotti, who was then Foreign Minister, to resign from the government because of his role in the Sindona affair. But when the matter came to a vote Andreotti was saved by the surprise abstention of the Italian Communist Party. The Historic Compromise was still paying unexpected dividends.

The Sindona affair showed clearly how porous the boundary had become between the legal and the illegal worlds, and Mafia business was booming as never before. Palermo had replaced the French Connection of Marseilles as the principal channel of heroin into the United States. In 1974, there were only eight deaths by drug overdose in all of Italy. A decade later, there were some two hundred and fifty thousand heroin addicts in the country, and the deaths had reached almost four hundred a year. As investigators in Sicily turned up more and more data on the drug trade, Cosa Nostra responded by killing police officers, prosecutors, and even politicians. In 1981, Palermo witnessed the outbreak of the most vicious Mafia war in its history. A new dominant group within the Mafia, headed by Salvatore (Totò) Riina, of Corleone, killed off the traditional bosses of Palermo and hunted and exterminated hundreds of their associates, friends, and relatives.

The explosion of drugs and violence suddenly made the Mafia a major national issue again. Virtually all public figures who dared to stand up to the Mafia were assassinated, one after another. In a climate of suspicion of collusion between the Mafia and the state, there was a growing public outcry for the D.C. to clean house in Sicily. The mayor of Palermo, one of Lima's protégés, was forced to resign, and Andreotti's Sicilian faction was badly on the defensive. Andreotti declares that the emergence of the drug trade in the eighties "opened my eyes" to the gravity of the Mafia problem. But he did not use the bloodbath in Palermo as an opportunity to rethink his strategy in Sicily. On the contrary, in 1982, in the middle of the Mafia war of Palermo, Andreotti arrived in the city to lend moral support to his beleaguered troops. "You Sicilian Christian Democrats are strong, that's why everyone speaks ill of you," he said, to the obvious delight of the crowd. "We reject the false moralism of these critics who foam at the mouth while you get stronger and stronger with each election."



The case against Andreotti would never have gone beyond the level of generic political denunciation without the arrival on the scene of witnesses from within the Mafia—a phenomenon unknown in Italy before 1983. Although the trials of the eighties concentrated on the military and economic dimensions of the Mafia, a consistent body of evidence about the relation between the Mafia and politics began to accumulate. More than half a dozen witnesses testified about Cosa Nostra's ties to the D.C., and, in particular, to Lima and the leading figures in the Andreotti faction in Sicily. Two of Lima's closest friends and biggest supporters—the cousins Nino and Ignazio Salvo, Sicilian businessmen—were convicted of being Mafia members. And it came out at their trial that when Lima was in Sicily he was under their personal protection, chauffeured around in their bulletproof car.

Even so, Lima himself never became the target of criminal investigation, because of reluctance on the part of both witnesses and prosecutors. The attitude was epitomized by a statement that the star witness Tommaso Buscetta made to the prosecutor Giovanni Falcone: "I have told you repeatedly that I would not discuss it until and if the time is ripe. It would be extremely foolish to discuss this subject—which is the crucial knot of the Mafia problem—while the very people whom we would be discussing remain fully active on the political scene." With his American handlers, Buscetta was more explicit. In 1985, the Assistant United States Attorney Richard Martin, together with the current F.B.I. director, Louis J. Freeh, questioned Buscetta extensively in preparation for the New York Mafia case known as the Pizza Connection. When Martin tried to press the issue of the Mafia's political protection, Buscetta explained that the enormity of the problem could be summed up in one word: Andreotti. Martin should be a key witness at Andreotti's trial, since his testimony would indicate that suspicions about Andreotti date back more than a decade, instead of having been cooked up recently in the course of a witch hunt against the former Prime Minister.

The case against Andreotti began to break open in 1992—the year in which Italian politics turned upside down. In January, the Italian Supreme

Court upheld the conviction of more than three hundred Mafiosi in the so-called maxi-trial of Palermo, the largest and arguably the most important Mafia trial in history. Based on the testimony of the first witnesses from within the Mafia itself, the case had established that Cosa Nostra was a hierarchical organization governed by a "commission," which decided on the most important actions of the group. This finding allowed the Italian state to hold the top bosses responsible for the most heinous crimes of the organization. Many of them were condemned to life in prison.

In the months after the Supreme Court decision, Cosa Nostra reacted with unprecedented fury. In March, Mafia killers assassinated Lima. In May, they blew up the prosecutor Giovanni Falcone, his wife, and three bodyguards. In July, a second car bomb killed Falcone's colleague and close friend Paolo Borsellino, along with five bodyguards. And in September the Mafia murdered Ignazio Salvo, the prominent Mafia businessman who had been close to Lima.

The killings occurred against a backdrop of profound political change. During those same months, hundreds of major politicians came under investigation in a national bribery scandal that started in Milan. After elections that spring, Andreotti began his semi-retirement as a Senator for Life, his reputation badly damaged by the questions surrounding the Lima assassination. (Since Lima had long been regarded as a friend of the Mafia, his death seemed to suggest the breaking of some secret pact, possibly between the Andreotti faction and Lima's Sicilian protectors.) Within a matter of a few months, Andreotti had ceased to be the most powerful politician in the country and had become a political liability. At the same time, the government of the new Socialist Prime Minister, Giuliano Amato, embarrassed into action, enacted a series of long-overdue laws, which established Italy's first witness-protection program and placed the most dangerous Mafia bosses in remote island prisons where they could not easily communicate with their organizations at home. The number of Mafia witnesses went from about two dozen in early 1992 to more than two hundred by the end of the year.

Buscetta, moved by the deaths of Falcone and Borsellino, decided to break his long silence on the politics of Cosa Nostra. He acknowledged that he had had extensive contacts with Lima between the late fifties, when Lima became mayor of Palermo, and 1980, when Buscetta moved from Sicily to Brazil. "Salvo Lima was, in fact, the politician to whom Cosa Nostra turned most often to resolve problems for the organization whose solution lay in Rome," he testified. Several different witnesses also testified that Lima had been specifically ordered to "fix" the appeal of the maxi-trial with Italy's Supreme Court and had been murdered because he failed to do so. These witnesses opened a window on the world of the Italian Supreme Court, which had, to put it mildly, taken an extremely indulgent attitude toward Cosa Nostra. "When the trial began, it was obvious to all 'men of honor' that it was a 'political' trial, whose outcome would be decided by the government in Rome," one of the new Mafia witnesses, Gaspare Mutolo, explained. "We all unanimously believed that the trial verdict would invariably be a conviction, because the government had to demonstrate to public opinion within Italy and abroad . . . that it could strike a hard blow to Cosa Nostra." The Mafia placed its hopes in the final appeal before the Italian Supreme Court, where one judge, Corrado Carnevale, known as l'Ammazzasentenze (the Sentence Killer), enjoyed a virtual monopoly on handling organized-crime cases. For several years, Carnevale had overturned conviction after conviction, throwing out years of trial work on the slenderest of technicalities. But ultimately Carnevale, giving in to increased pressure from the public and from Giovanni Falcone, who was busy investigating him, withdrew from the maxi-trial.

"Carnevale . . . was a guarantee for us, and certainly not only because of his ideas of jurisprudence: the word was that he was 'malleable,' " another new witness, Leonardo Messina, said. "As for the killings. . . . A reaction was absolutely necessary . . . against the magistrates who had handled the case and against the politicians who had failed to guarantee the positive outcome of the trial and had allowed Carnevale to be removed from the case."

Andreotti insists that Lima, Falcone, and Borsellino were killed in retaliation for his government's vigorous war on crime. It is true that Andreotti's seventh government (1991-92)—thanks especially to the presence of Falcone at the Ministry of Justice—took a number of decisive steps against Cosa Nostra. "When he says that he took extremely harsh measures against the Mafia, he isn't lying," Eugenio Scalfari, the editor of the Rome newspaper *La Repubblica*, says.

A FILM

Now that my life is coming to an end,
a director wants to turn it into a film,
an hour and forty minutes long.
Would I agree to play myself,
exaggerating my nervous tics
and suffering in some aesthetic fashion?
I should no longer bend over to write
poems on my knees;
instead, my forehead must shine
and my pen scrawl
my name with a flourish in the sky,
while my nostrils widen
and a thousand mirrors do me justice.
I insist:
no profiles, please, no flattering grins.
As for my books, whose fidelity I now find questionable,
they'd better be signed by some other poet.

—Alain Bosquet

(*Translated, from the French, by William Jay Smith.*)

"I think at a certain point in the late nineteen-eighties he realized that the Mafia could not be controlled. He awoke from his perennial distraction . . . and the Mafia, which realized that it could no longer count on his protection or tolerance, assassinated his man in Sicily."

This conjecture does not conflict with the testimony of the witnesses who say that Andreotti double-crossed the Mafia after decades of collusion. Mutolo, for example, testified that "Lima was killed because he was the greatest symbol of that part of the political world which, after having adopted a policy of peaceful coexistence with the Mafia, doing favors for Cosa Nostra in exchange for its votes, was no longer able to protect the interests of the organization at the time of its most important trial."

The untying of the knot of complicity between the Mafia and politics was accompanied by further successes against the military arm of Cosa Nostra. Mafia bosses who had eluded arrest for decades, including Totò Riina, the boss of bosses—he'd been a fugitive for twenty-three years—were suddenly captured. In early 1993, prosecutors began to investigate Andreotti's possible connections with the Mafia. The arrest of Riina, in particular, appears to have strengthened the resolve of several witnesses. "I have realized," Mutolo testified, "that I must put aside once and for all any fears that . . . have kept me from revealing everything I know on this subject, starting with the most important problem . . . Cosa Nostra's most powerful political ally: Senator Giulio Andreotti. . . . The 'normal circuit' for all problems that needed attention in Rome was: Ignazio Salvo, Onorevole Salvo Lima, and Senator Giulio Andreotti."

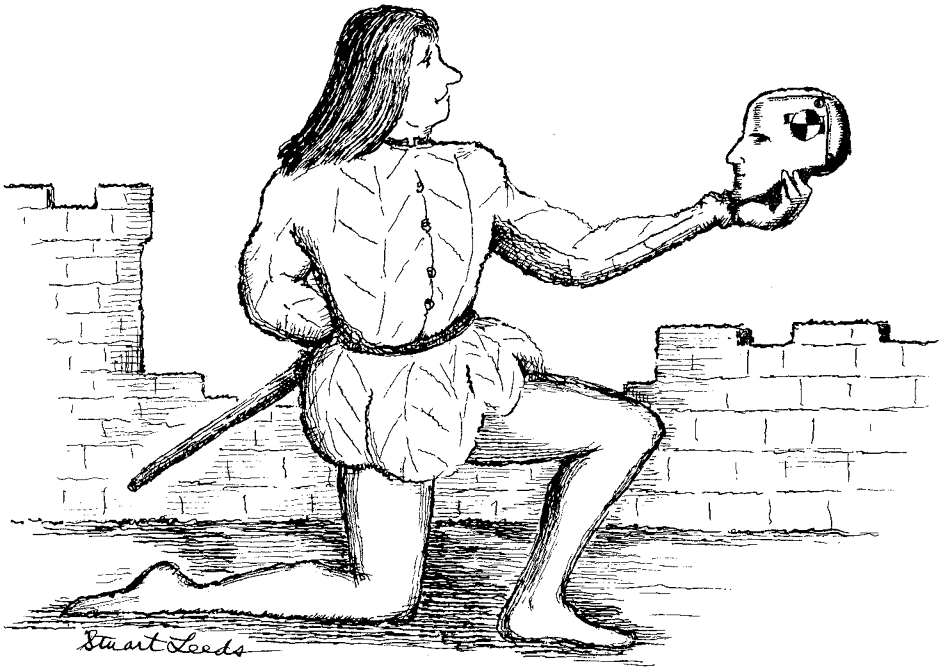
In the next few months, several other coöperating witnesses came forward with revelations about Andreotti. Some of them said that within the organization Andreotti was known as lo Zio Giulio (Uncle Giulio), or simply the Uncle. Buscetta made the most disturbing accusation of all: that the Mafia had murdered a journalist who was threatening Andreotti. The victim was Carmine (Mino) Pecorelli, who had been shot to death in Rome in March of 1979. "The Pecorelli murder was a political crime commissioned by the Salvo cousins, at the request of Onorevole Andreotti," Buscetta told the chief prosecutor of Palermo. Buscetta's sources were two powerful Mafia bosses who indicated that they themselves had helped plan the killing. One of them is alleged to have told Buscetta that he had met personally with Andreotti in Rome to see about the appeal of a court conviction, which was in fact overturned.

Virtually all Andreotti's accusers were repeating things they had been told by other Mafia members—insisting, however, that "men of honor" would not lie about such serious matters. Two witnesses, both questioned in April of 1993, claimed to have actually seen Andreotti at Mafia summit meetings, one in 1980 and the other in 1987. One of them testified that at the second encounter Riina met with Ignazio Salvo, Lima, and Andreotti in Salvo's Palermo apartment, greeting each of them with a kiss.

Most people who know Andreotti find the scene of the meeting with Riina and the kiss extremely difficult to believe. "Nonsense!" Father Mario Canciani, Andreotti's personal confessor, said in a recent interview. "Andreotti doesn't even kiss his own children." And Scalfari, of *La Repubblica*, says, "It's not like him. He's a very prudent man." But, if people in Rome find the story of the kiss totally absurd, in Palermo it is treated with much less incredulity. When Ciccio Ingrassia, a Sicilian comedian, was asked about it during a television interview, he gave a highly Sicilian reply: "I don't know if Riina and Andreotti met or not, but if they met they certainly kissed each other." A Palermo prosecutor explained this view: "Since Riina would have automatically kissed Ignazio Salvo and Salvatore Lima, he would have to have greeted Andreotti in the same manner, in order to show that they were all on the same level—that the head of Cosa Nostra was not inferior to the head of the legal Italian state."

The charges against Andreotti cannot be dismissed out of hand. Even the most incredible accusation of all—that Andreotti commissioned the murder of the journalist Mino Pecorelli—is far from implausible. When my book on the Mafia was completed earlier this year, the outlines of the case were already clear, but further investigative work by prosecutors, who have since released a nine-volume indictment, has made it one of the strongest elements in the case against Andreotti. Pecorelli, the editor of a scandal sheet called *O.P.*, was part muckraker, part blackmailer. His articles lambasted Italy's corrupt ruling élite and hinted tantalizingly at explosive information to come in future issues, sending veiled messages to the interested parties. In some cases, he would actually notify the target of a damaging scoop, and then, for a price, withdraw it from publication. Pecorelli's information, however, was frequently superb. He had numerous sources in the Italian secret services, and many people used his publication to leak classified documents and settle scores with their political opponents.

In early 1979, Pecorelli had prepared



a cover story on Andreotti's apparent involvement in what promised to be a major bribery scandal, entitled "All the President's Checks." Just two months before his death, Pecorelli met with Andreotti's "legal adviser," Claudio Vitalone, at a Rome restaurant, and the cover story on Andreotti was held back. At the time, Vitalone was a magistrate in the Rome prosecutor's office—the office that was supposed to investigate political corruption in Rome and would later be assigned to investigate the Pecorelli killing itself. Not surprisingly, the investigation went nowhere. But the official story began to fall apart in the spring of 1993, when Franco Evangelisti, Andreotti's lifelong right-hand man, who was sick and about to die, unburdened himself of a number of shocking secrets. He confessed under oath that he had personally paid Pecorelli thirty million lire (about forty-two thousand dollars at the time) to get him to suppress the cover story on Andreotti. As it happened, Pecorelli was murdered on the day after the payoff.

Several participants in the showdown between Pecorelli and Vitalone, after denying that they had ever discussed anything to do with Andreotti, have now admitted that they lied for nearly fifteen years, covering up important evidence in a homicide investigation. One of the participants, Carlo Testi, who was one of the most important magistrates in the country, was asked to explain his illegal behavior. He replied, "I repressed it. . . . It was like opening a door and witnessing some embarrassing scene, and closing the door and saying, 'I didn't see anything.' "

Pecorelli had information that the Andreotti faction had received sizable illegal contributions from two companies that went bankrupt and had received hundreds of millions of dollars from state-owned banks because of their friendship with the Prime Minister. Pecorelli knew the names and the numbers on checks totalling more than two million dollars that had been placed at Andreotti's disposal: many of the checks were made out to nonexistent people but had been cashed by some of Andreotti's closest aides.

Following Evangelisti's confession, another of Andreotti's political operatives, Ezio Radaelli, admitted that he had received illegal bank checks for about two hundred and forty thousand dollars directly from Andreotti in order to organize campaign rallies. Radaelli also testified that on two different occasions he was pressured not to mention Andreotti's name to prosecutors investigating the scandal. (Even the man doing the pressuring, an Andreotti aide-de-camp, has admitted that the charge was true.) In typical fashion, Andreotti tried to brush off his relations with Pecorelli when he appeared before prosecutors in the case, by recounting a humorous anecdote, which revealed, nonetheless, that he was fully aware of Pecorelli's threats. "Onorevole Evangelisti told me that Pecorelli intended to publish an article against me about certain checks," Andreotti testified. "I gave no weight to the matter, also because of the reputation of the magazine *O.P.* Evangelisti told me that he had found Pecorelli devastated by terrible headaches from which he suffered periodically and which—perhaps jokingly—he attributed to the toughness of some of his journalistic attacks. Because I, too, have suffered from migraine for many years, I sent him a medicine I have found to be very helpful, with a note wishing him every relief." While Andreotti has claimed he was much too busy with important affairs of state to be bothered with the financing of his faction, his anecdote shows him to be intimately involved with its most minute aspects. His concern for Pecorelli's migraine also demonstrates his legendary attention to detail and his exquisite sense of irony: sending headache medicine to an enemy who was creating a major political migraine for him.

Moreover, the money trail of the check scandal leads back to the Mafia. Some of the checks were cashed by a company that was controlled by a notorious gangster, the head of a Roman organized-crime group known as the Magliana Gang. The group was a Mafia satellite that sold heroin—provided by the Sicilians—in Rome. Another of the checks turned up in the pocket of a known Mafia boss when he was killed in the streets of Palermo, in 1978.

Pecorelli had stumbled onto something much bigger than illegal campaign financing—a scandal that revealed ties between Andreotti's financial backers and organized crime. Ballistic evidence linked the bullets that killed Pecorelli to a gun that was confiscated when an arsenal of the Magliana Gang was recovered. And several former members of the gang have now admitted that the gang agreed to kill Pecorelli as a favor to Vitalone and the Sicilian Mafia. In short, many of the elements of Buscetta's initial allegations have been borne out to an astonishing degree. The boss of the Magliana Gang, who is believed to have organized the killing, was murdered in 1982. But his former girlfriend, who also participated in the gang's criminal activities, has testified that she met Vitalone at least three times. And another woman, the wife of an alleged kidnapper associated with the Magliana Gang, testified that one day when an image of Andreotti and Vitalone came on television her husband said, "Nobody would think, seeing them dressed in coat and tie, that they commissioned the killing of that journalist."

PYTHAGORAS' TROUSERS
Victoria Roberts

"I thought you said you were just passing through."

When I asked a prosecutor who has focussed specifically on the Pecorelli killing whether he could actually imagine Andreotti commissioning a murder, he said no. There is, of course, a third and more ambiguous possibility: that someone in Andreotti's entourage commissioned the murder, in the belief that he was doing his master's bidding—like the scene in the play "Becket" where the King of England rails against Thomas à Becket, the meddlesome Archbishop of Canterbury, inspiring some of the men at court to go out and murder him. Is it possible, I asked Andreotti, that something similar might have happened in the Pecorelli case—that he might have expressed frustration with Pecorelli which someone else might have interpreted wrongly? "I understand your question," Andreotti said, pausing to reflect. "I never considered Pecorelli such a potentially damaging element. I genuinely hope they find the solution to this mystery."

"Actually, the first name was easy. It's her last name we're battling about."

• •

ANDREOTTI and many of his chief supporters insist that he is the victim of a carefully orchestrated conspiracy. They find it suspicious that more serious accusations seemed to emerge with each round of depositions, and that witnesses who never mentioned Andreotti's name in the past have suddenly stepped forward with devastating charges.

The most popular theory is that Cosa Nostra has planted false witnesses in order to punish Andreotti for his stalwart efforts against the Mafia. But a Mafia conspiracy to get Andreotti would be a near-impossibility in practical terms. Many of the Mafia witnesses accusing Andreotti are held in different secret locations—some in different countries—and have little or no opportunity to contact one another. Many of them do not know one another and are from different generations and different parts of Sicily. Above all, why would the older witnesses—who broke with the Mafia years ago, whose families have been hunted down and killed—suddenly lend themselves to a Mafia plot to destroy Andreotti?

Another leading theory is that the witnesses are being manipulated by Giancarlo Caselli, the current chief prosecutor in Palermo, because he is trying to destroy Andreotti in order to fulfill a left-wing political agenda. Quite aside from the fact that Caselli has a long record of professional integrity, this theory has problems. Caselli does not work alone. In fact, the outlines of the Andreotti case were already present in the indictment for the murder of Lima, which was drawn up in October, 1992—three months before Caselli arrived in Palermo. A conspiracy against Andreotti would require the participation of at least three different branches of the Italian police, not to mention agents of the United States Marshals' Service, the F.B.I., and the Drug Enforcement Agency, who were watching over Buscetta and Francesco Marino Mannoia in this country. Andreotti, in fact, seems convinced that someone in the United States is directing the "conspiracy" against him, although this, too, makes little sense: the Mafiosi in the U.S. witness-protection program were the last to accuse him, after the investigation was already well under way.

The gradual escalation of accusations against Andreotti can be explained simply by the witnesses' candidly articulated fear of tackling the problem of the Mafia and politics. The fact that there is no organized conspiracy against Andreotti, however, does not necessarily make the accusations true. While many important witnesses, like Tommaso Buscetta, have excellent records for reliability, they are often repeating things told to them by others. They assert that "men of honor" never lie when discussing Mafia business, but one would not want to convict a former Prime Minister on blind faith in the inviolability of the Mafia's code of honor. It is possible that their sources of information—other Mafia bosses—wanted to exaggerate their political influence in order to increase their prestige within Cosa Nostra. And these bosses may have simply assumed that Andreotti was involved, given Lima's extensive contacts with the Mafia.

Because of these potential difficulties, the case against Andreotti may hinge on the testimony of just two people—the only eyewitnesses directly tying him to the bosses of the Mafia. While one of them, Baldassare Di Maggio, is the man who has told the seemingly incredible story of the kiss between Andreotti and

Riina, he is also the man who helped the police capture Riina—thereby proving in the most eloquent manner possible that he was a member of the Mafia's inner circle. The other witness, Francesco Marino Mannoia, who claims to have seen Andreotti at a Mafia summit, has also greatly impressed investigators with his seriousness and reliability. Mannoia began talking about Lima and the relationship between the Mafia and politics in 1989, when prosecutors were afraid to touch the issue.

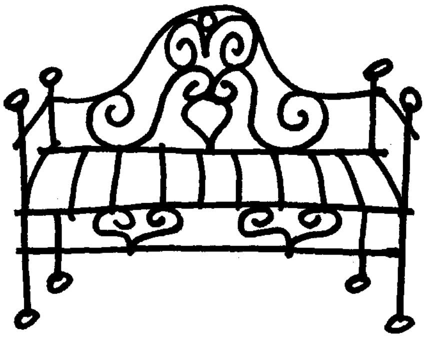
Andreotti's own credibility under oath, on the other hand, has been badly eroded. He was forced in depositions to retract previous testimony, in which he had denied distributing some of the checks Pecorelli had learned about and had denied asking one of the witnesses not to implicate him in the scandal. Moreover, it appears he was not telling the truth when he vehemently declared he had never met the Salvo cousins of Palermo. Last year, investigators turned up an old news photograph, in the archives of a well-known Palermo photographer, showing Andreotti with Nino Salvo at a Christian Democratic rally held in the Salvos' Zagarella Hotel complex. It is highly unlikely that a man who remembered fourteen years after the fact that he had sent migraine medicine to Mino Pecorelli—someone he had never met—would forget having been the personal guest of one of the richest men in Sicily and one of the D.C.'s largest donors.

Unfortunately, in the court of public opinion the Andreotti case is likely to be reduced to the question of whether or not Totò Riina kissed Andreotti. The decision to convict or acquit may come down to whether one chooses to believe the word of a former Prime Minister or that of two self-confessed killers. And if those two witnesses are discredited many people will conclude that all the other witnesses are lying, and Andreotti is the victim of a massive political witch-hunt.

The emphasis on whether or not Andreotti met with bosses of the Mafia distracts attention from a larger and more important question about his role in a political system badly tainted by Mafia ties. The prosecutors have presented convincing evidence that Andreotti chose to cynically accept the support of people who were clearly tied to organized crime, and that he ignored overwhelming signs that many people in his entourage were in bed with the Mafia. The court will have to decide whether Andreotti's role in this system of Mafia power was purely passive or crossed the line into active complicity.

A crucial part of the prosecution's case is the allegation that Andreotti intervened with the Italian Supreme Court to fix organized-crime cases. The prosecution has produced evidence strongly suggesting that Justice Carnevale, the infamous Sentence Killer, was taking bribes and fixing cases, and Carnevale is himself under indictment. "That's his problem," Andreotti said when I asked him about it. It may also become Andreotti's problem, however. Andreotti and Carnevale have both denied knowing each other—statements that, to put it politely, have subsequently been shown to be less than truthful. Andreotti testified that they had met at a few public functions, "as with a hundred different judges in Rome, a relationship of 'hello and goodbye.' " Instead, it turns out, Andreotti was the president of a foundation that made Carnevale a member of its board of directors. The two men met regularly for years. Carnevale and Vitalone also claimed to be nothing more than superficial acquaintances, but were later forced to admit that Carnevale had been a frequent guest at Vitalone's dinner parties and at his country home outside Rome.

Most important of all, investigators have come up with a crucial piece of testimony suggesting that Andreotti intervened to help save Carnevale's career. In the mid-eighties, it appears, Carnevale acted improperly to protect a Sicilian magistrate who was under indictment for (and eventually convicted of) collusion with the Mafia. Another magistrate, Mario Almerighi, brought the case to the attention of the Ministry of Justice and tried to initiate an internal investigation of Carnevale. The Justice Minister agreed, but then nothing happened. Eventually, Almerighi said, an official close to the Minister explained "that Andreotti intervened personally, saying something like 'No one touches Carnevale.' "



WHILE some Italians have complained that the Andreotti case is a waste of resources—an exercise in criminal archeology that diverts energy from current cases—others feel that it is a necessary exorcism, which will finally allow Italy to move into a different future. The reason the Italian judiciary has been forced to deal with the Andreotti case at all is that Italy's political system has persistently failed to clean its own house. "In a normal country, Andreotti would have been pushed to the sidelines of political life, and Lima would never have been a candidate for public office," says Leoluca Orlando, who emerged as the principal opponent of Lima and Andreotti in the Sicilian D.C. during the eighties, when he became the mayor of Palermo.

But others feel that it is a mistake to reduce the Andreotti case to a criminal matter. "A purely moralistic position reduces us to this paradox: if Andreotti has been one of the heads of the Mafia, then the Mafia has governed Italy for the last forty years," says Giuliano Ferrara, the spokesman for the conservative former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. "My compliments to the Mafia for how well it has governed."

History may yet assign a high place to the Christian Democrats for maintaining democracy and peace in Italy and presiding over a period of unprecedented prosperity. And it is certainly true that one cannot entirely separate the Andreotti case from the history of the D.C. In 1988, when Mayor Orlando challenged his fellow Christian Democrats to drop Lima from the list of candidates for the European Parliament, not a single member of the Party leadership accepted the challenge. "I tried to convince members of the left wing of the Party: 'Vote against him—he'll be approved anyway, but at least when they write the history of this country they can say that someone voted against,' " Orlando says. "These men were not all Mafiosi; some of them probably were, but many voted out of Party loyalty, some out of respect for Andreotti. But there was not one person who left to smoke a cigarette so that he could say, 'I didn't vote.' "

The Andreotti trial may provide a

great public education about the dark side of recent Italian history. It could also lead to an unsatisfying, inconclusive finale. "It will end up *all'italiana*"—in the Italian fashion—a friend of mine predicts. "It will take so long, between the trial and the appeals, that Andreotti will die before it is over."

In preparation for the trial, Andreotti appears to have been working hard to rehabilitate his public image. This week, he is undertaking a P.R. blitz in the United States, apparently in the hope that a change in American public opinion will reverse his fortunes. During the early part of the summer, he flew to Israel, Syria, and Iran to try to unblock the stalemated diplomatic situation in the Middle East. And in August he played a part in a drama based on Dante's Divine Comedy, produced by a member of the right-wing (post-Fascist) political party Alleanza Nazionale. Curiously, he agreed to play the role of Pope Boniface VIII, a ruthless, indomitable believer in papal temporal power, whom Dante consigned to one of the lowest circles of Hell. Like so many things in Andreotti's career, this peculiar gesture is extremely difficult to interpret: is it simply an expression of his well-known love for Dante studies, an ironic jest, or a strange public confession of sin?

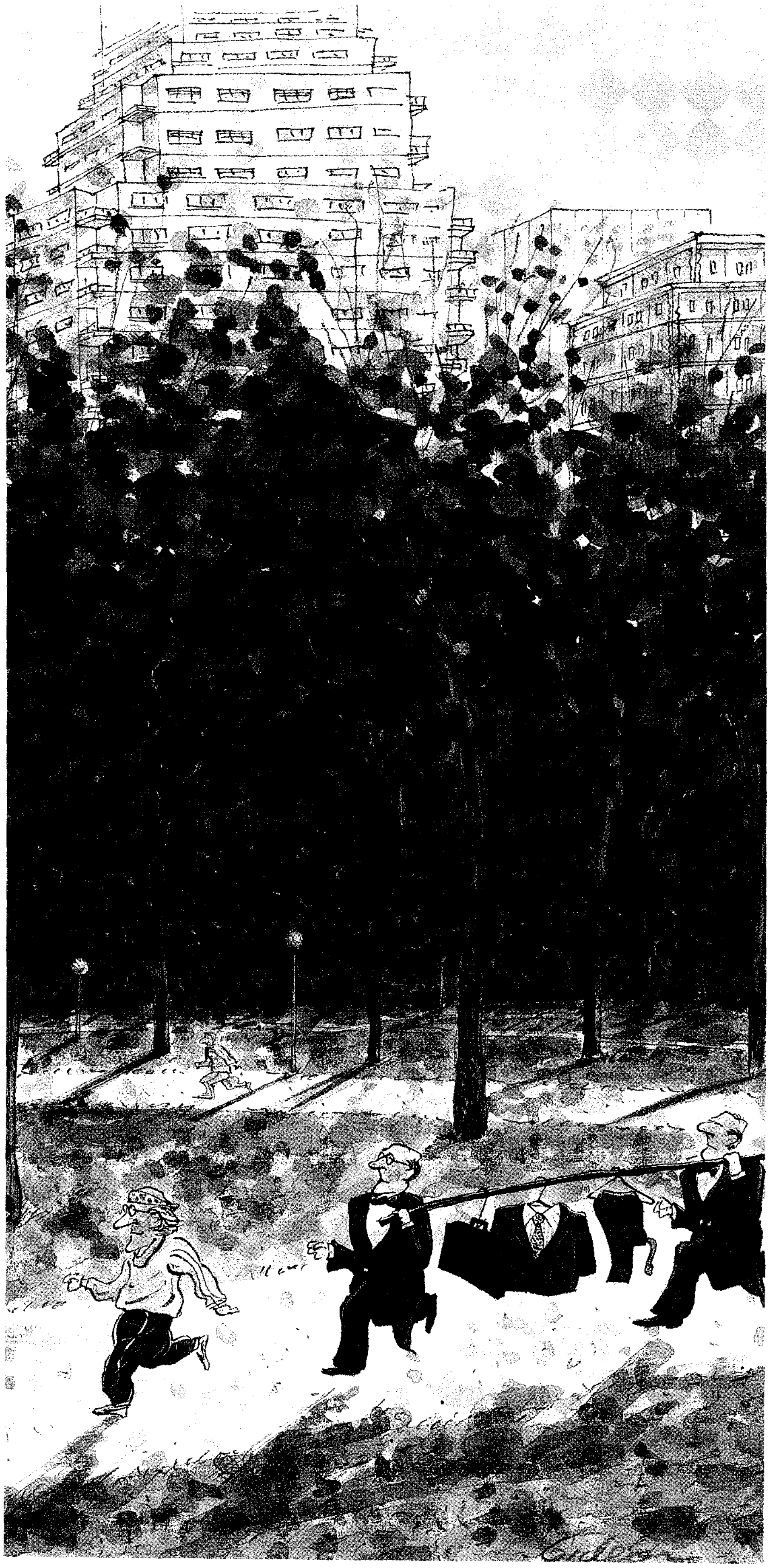
Andreotti himself is the mystery at the heart of the trial. The criminal case may come down to what the court makes of this enigmatic and contradictory figure—friend of Popes and malefactors. Without a smoking gun, it will be difficult to move most Italians from their preconceived positions. How much of the prosecution's case one believes will depend on what one thinks of Andreotti and what kind of compromises this great compromiser was capable of. And it is a mystery that not even those closest to him have managed to penetrate.

Several years ago, Ciriaco De Mita, who was president of the Christian Democratic Party at the time, surprised a friend by asking him suddenly, "Do you know who Andreotti is?"

The friend was somewhat taken aback; after all, Andreotti and De Mita had been Party colleagues for thirty years, and De Mita had become the president of the D.C. with Andreotti's support. "You should know that much better than I," he answered.

"I have no idea," De Mita said. ◆

ON THE FAST TRACK



FICTION

A COTTAGE NEAR TWIN FALLS

BY EVAN S. CONNELL

Dear William Koerner:
I have long been an ardent admirer of your novels, and it has occurred to me that I may render a small service in return for the many pleasurable reading hours that your books have afforded me. It so happens that I have a summer cottage near Twin Falls, which, owing to the exigencies of business, I shall be unable to occupy this summer, as is my usual custom. If you would care to "get away from it all" for several weeks I would feel honored. . . .

KOERNER scanned the rest of the letter, glanced at the signature, rolled a sheet of notepaper into his typewriter, and quickly tapped out:

Dear Mr. Oates:
Thank you for your letter and your kind invitation to spend several weeks at your cottage near Twin Falls. I'm sorry that at present I'm unable to accept your offer. I do appreciate the invitation.

Cordially,
William Koerner

He signed the note and put it in an envelope just as the telephone rang.

"Hello, Koerner! MacChesney. Am I disturbing you?"

"Hello, Mac," Koerner said. "I was answering the mail."

"Fan letters?"

"One."

"How's the Great American Novel coming along?"

"You, too?"

"Did I say something wrong?"

"Everybody asks the same question."

After a pause, MacChesney said, "Koerner, old man, I was just curious."

"Sorry," Koerner said. "I've been locked up too long. Have you been out of town? I haven't heard from you in a while."

"Right here. Nose to the grindstone. *Comme toujours*, as the French say. In fact, I'm at the office right now. Listen, there's a cocktail party tonight, and I was wondering if you'd like to come along. Chances are it would bore you stiff. If you'd rather stay home and work, don't hesitate to say so."

"A cocktail party sounds wonderful," Koerner said. "I'd love to go."

"You would?"

"I haven't been to a party in six months."

"Really?"

"I'd love to get out. Who's giving it?"

"Bibi and Dennis Pratt."

"I don't know them. Would they mind if you brought me?"

"Bibi asked me to ask you. She's a great fan."

"Oh," said Koerner.

"Well!" MacChesney said. "This is a surprise. I was positive you'd turn it down. I'll drop by for you at eight o'clock."

"I'll be waiting," Koerner said.

MACCHESNEY arrived a little after nine. On the way to the party, he said, "Seriously, old man, how's the new opus coming along? Just curious."

"*Ça va*, as the French say."

"Picked out a title, or does the publisher do that?"

"We're discussing it. I want to call it 'Old Man Goriot' but the publisher thinks it would sell better if we called it 'War and Peace.' "

" 'War and Peace,' " MacChesney said. "That's been used before. I don't think the other title is very good."

They had been at the party only a few minutes when somebody said, "I understand the title of your new book is 'The Old Man and the Sea.' "

"No," Koerner said. "I wish it was."

"Hal Shaw," another voice said. "Honored to meet you, Mr. Koerner. Something I've been wanting to ask . . . what do you think of Ian Fleming?"

"I haven't read any of his books."

"You a writer and don't read Fleming?"

"Once upon a time I read a Mickey Spillane," Koerner said. "It was fascinating. I didn't realize an hour had slipped away."

"What's your opinion of Agatha Christie?" asked an old lady who was clutching what appeared to be a glass of undiluted bourbon.

"I haven't read any of her books," Koerner said. "Do you enjoy them?"

"No," the old lady said. "They bore the bloomers off me. I just wondered what you thought. Do you like Belva Plain?"

"Do you write every day?" somebody else was asking.

"Where do you find your inspiration? Does it come naturally?"

"Let's get together for lunch one day next week," said a man who, after shaking hands, would not let go. "I got an idea for a novel, but I don't have the knack of putting things down on paper. It's a great story. Needs to be ironed out, but you could make up a plot and knock it together in no time flat. We'll split fifty-fifty."

"My niece wants to become a writer," said another voice, "but apparently you don't stand a chance unless you know the key person. She's written a novel, but for some reason it was rejected. Will you read it and give her some professional criticism?"

A young man who had been leaning against the mantel with a dignified expression was suddenly at Koerner's elbow, saying, in an undertone, "Got time to read my stuff?"

"William Koerner?" a new voice inquired. "Let me shake you by the hand, sir. Enjoyed your book from beginning to end. My sincere congratulations."

"Thank you," Koerner said. "I've written several. Which one did you like?"

" 'Deadly Gambit.' "

"Oh. That's not mine."

"I thought your name was Koerner."

"Yes, that's right."

"You're not the author of 'Deadly Gambit'?"

"No. I . . ."

A woman in a Norwegian ski sweater asked if William Koerner was a pen name or if it was real.

"I don't know," Koerner said.

"Is your book in the bookstores? Or might you have an extra copy?"

"I'm absolutely dying to ask you one question," said a gaunt woman with a Dauphin haircut. "How do you invent your ideas? Do you make them up, or do they come to you naturally?"

"You a writer?" asked an old man with shaggy eyebrows.

Koerner nodded and took a drink.

"Published?"

Koerner nodded.

"Written any best-sellers?"

"No."

"Let me give you a bit of advice, young fellow. Write about real people."

"You wrote a book?" asked a woman who resembled a chipmunk. "Is it fiction? Or is it a novel?"

MacChesney came back with two friends, one of whom looked frightened, while the other, after hanging an arm around Koerner's shoulders, breathed into his face and said, "Tell me the truth, how much do you guys make? Not being nosy, understand, just curious. In round numbers, how much?"

"What do you think of Iris Murdoch?" asked a plump woman who giggled.

"I haven't read any of her books," Koerner said.

"She's simply wonderfully good. Do you care for Ayn Rand?"

"We haven't met," Koerner said and took another drink.

"That's odd! What time of the morning do you get up?"

"Excuse me for interrupting," said a woman with a face as round as an onion, "I'm Dodie Truehorse. We have mutual friends—the Boppetts."

"Boppett?" said Koerner.

"Surely you remember them. You met at a gathering in Los Angeles four years ago. They've talked about you often. I'm not going to detain you, but of course they'll skin me alive if I can't tell them what your new book is all about."

"I didn't catch your last name," Koerner said. "It sounded like Truehorse."

"That's correct. People assume I'm an Indian, but I'm not, although I was born in Montana."

"Montana," Koerner said. "That's one of my favorite states. Do you know what happens when a workman falls into a vat of molten copper?"

"Good Heavens! What?"

"The copper company ladles out some of it and lets it cool into a brick and then conducts a funeral service and buries it. But the price of copper keeps going up, so the bricks get smaller and smaller. I don't know how big they are now, probably about the size of a sugar cube."

"That's disgusting!" said Dodie Truehorse.

"He sounds like a pinko," said another woman. "He should be investigated."

"I admire you," said a man with bleary eyes. "Never read anything you wrote, but I admire the hell out of you."

"Composition must be excruciating," said an elfin creature. "You must feel utterly exhausted."

"Not in the least," Koerner said. "I . . ."

"Billyboy! How you doing?"

The man looked familiar, but Koerner could not think of his name.

"Skip Gershman. We went to high school together. Used to play tennis at the old Armour Fields court. I knew you *when*, Bill, so don't big-shot me. How does it feel to be famous?"

"The last I heard of you," Koerner said, "and this was about fifteen years ago, I ran into somebody who mentioned that you were selling fire insurance."

"Bingo! Same office as little Joe Pacelli. How's that for coincidence? Remember Pacelli? Had a sister named Gloria with hairy legs. Now listen, I got to tell you this true story about what happened last summer to my brother-in-law. It's a riot. You'll die laughing. Put this in print and you'll make a bundle. I'm going to let you have it for nothing—not asking a cent. I'd jot it down myself, but I'm busy."

Koerner stared into his drink until the story was over.

"Not asking a cent," Gershman repeated. "Give me a credit line, that's all I want. Great seeing you again. Keep up the good work."

"I understand you're an author," somebody said. "What do you do for a living?"

Koerner pushed his way through the crowd into an alcove beside the bar.

"What do you think of Maxine Hong Kingston?" a little voice inquired.

Koerner looked around and discovered that he had been followed by the Iris Murdoch lady.

"I think Maxine Hong Kingston is mysterious," he said. "What do you think of Han Suyin?"

"I prefer Amy Tan."

"What about Hamilton Basso?"

"Have you written for the stage? If not, you must," said a bald young man with horn-rimmed glasses and a cigarette holder. "You honestly must."

"This may sound rude," somebody else began, "but I wasn't altogether satisfied with the conclusion of your last book. It seems to me it should have ended on a different note."

MacChesney came back with a girl in a turtleneck sweater and a rope of African beads who said, "Are you writing at the moment?"

"Who do you admire above everyone else in the world?" asked a lady with a Southern accent. "Eudora Welty or William Faulkner?"

"Jack Dempsey," Koerner said.

"Don't remember me, do you?" asked a grinning fat man. "Bet a dime you don't."

After looking at him Koerner said, "No, I'm sorry. I can't remember. Where did we meet?"

"Mister, you go to Hades in a handcart," said the fat man. He stalked off.

"How wonderful to be talented," the Southern lady said. "Do you write all day or do you wait for inspiration to strike?"

"And your name, sir?" asked a scholarly man wearing a Dartmouth blazer.

"William Koerner."

"Frankly, that means nothing," the man remarked with a pleasant smile. "Have you done anything I should know about?"

"No," Koerner said. "But tell me, what is your opinion of Ivy Compton-Burnett? Is she as significant as Clorinda LeCoq?"

ON the way home from the party, MacChesney said, "Well, sport, did you enjoy yourself?"

"I'd almost forgotten about cocktail parties," Koerner said.

"You might not know this," MacChesney said, "but you're potted."

"I didn't make it up," Koerner said. "It just came naturally."

MacChesney coasted to a stop in front of the apartment. "Ardyce and Poom are throwing a bash tomorrow. They asked me to invite you."

"Ardyce and Poom?"

"He's a top gun at Dixon, Wechsler, Katz, Pomerantz and Figgie."

"Uris, Christie, Rushdie and Puzo," Koerner said. "Spillane, Plain and Tan."

MacChesney sighed.

"Tell me the truth," Koerner said as he began climbing out of the car. "Have you read Danielle Steel's latest? Had brunch with Leo Tolstoy? Played badminton with Barbara Taylor Bradford?"

"You're absolutely soaked," MacChesney said. "There's no point in talking to you. But seriously, do you want to go? Ardyce is a great fan. And Poom's not bad, once you get to know him. How about it?"

"Tell Ardyce and Poom that I appreciate the invitation," Koerner said, "but I'll be out of town. I'm eloping with Dodie Truehorse." ♦

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NO EASY WAY OUT

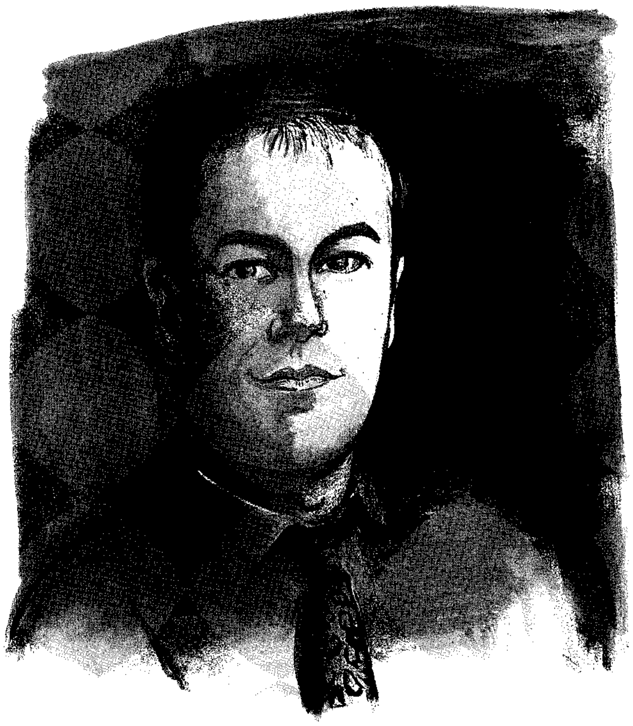
Liberals, conservatives, gays, and what to do about them.

BY ALAN RYAN

ANDREW SULLIVAN believes that "Western society" is making a "tense and often fevered attempt" to sort out its views about the social and legal treatment of homosexuals. Hence "Virtually Normal: An Argument About Homosexuality" (Knopf; $22). But is it true that Western society is so stirred up? Apparently, it is Americans—and Americans alone—who are in this fevered state. Even so, Sullivan's book is timely, and when he writes anxiously about the "cacophony of passion and reason, propaganda and statistics, self-disclosures and bouts of hysteria" which has marked the debate in recent years it is with just cause.

In 1992, Oregon's Ballot Measure 9 proposed to insert in the state's constitution the proposition that homosexuality is "abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse" and would also have required the state to teach the wrongness of "homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism and masochism," as if these were all part of one unlovely stew; forty-three per cent of the electorate voted for the measure. Vulgar homophobia is matched by educated silliness. That same year, when Colorado actually passed its Proposition 2, which prohibited municipalities from singling out gays for special protection, opponents claimed that the measure violated the First Amendment by enacting into law a religiously based ideal of sexual morality. The Colorado Supreme Court was bombarded with briefs from professors: John Finnis, an Oxford law professor, and his allies argued that homosexual conduct was unnatural by secular standards, and cited Plato and Aristotle in support; on the other side, Martha Nussbaum, a philosopher at the University of Chicago, argued that Plato was not as hostile to homosexuality as the supporters of Proposition 2 had said. Commentators were oddly reluctant to point out that even in a lunatic asylum it would seem mad to suggest that the degree of toleration extended to homosexuals should hang on disputed passages in Plato's "Laws," written circa 350 B.C.

The Supreme Court itself has not been immune to the national hysteria. In that 1986 gem Bowers v. Hardwick, the Court had to decide whether the Georgia statute against sodomy violated the Ninth Amendment right to privacy, and whether the state's selective enforcement against homosexuals violated the Fourteenth Amendment right to due process. The Court found the statute constitutional, but the surprise lay in the passion with which the Chief Justice, Warren Burger, enunciated the proposition that "in constitutional terms there is no such thing as a fundamental right to commit homosexual sodomy." Who suggested that there was, except in the sense that there is a "fundamental right" to fart, belch, pick your nose, and engage in innumerable other acts in private?


Andrew Sullivan: What are homosexuals for?

TOM LULEVITCH

The American obsession with homosexuality belongs on the same list of oddities as the American passion for capital punishment and the American incapacity to reach a modus vivendi on abortion. Presumably, it is rooted in the intensity of American religiosity, and the country's vulnerability to outbreaks of paranoia. The very diversity of beliefs and life styles in the United States causes Americans to be unusually nervous about each other's reliability and normality, resulting in the mixture of conformism and variety which everyone since Tocqueville has remarked on. Sullivan is an Englishman, but—surprisingly—he has little emotional or intellectual distance on the American obsession with his subject. It is not only in using "preference" as a verb that Mr. Sullivan has gone native.

Sullivan is very conscious that the violence of public sentiment has made it difficult to write about homosexuality in any way that might advance the discussion. The five-thousandth account of "How I found my way out of the closet" is not likely to change anyone's mind about the sinfulness of sodomy or the competence of homosexual marines. On the other hand, urging cool reasonableness on warring fundamentalists is bound to be a thankless task. Sullivan aims at the sobriety and impersonality of the seminar; in fact, he achieves something rather different and more ambiguous.

His purpose, he says, is to write not about "how a person deals with his or her sexuality" but about "how we as a society deal with that small minority of us which is homosexual." "Virtually Normal" is in intention—and, for the most part, in execution—a book about the politics of homosexuality: about whether the civil rights of gays need protecting in the same way as those of African-

Americans; whether it matters if gays are or are not allowed to serve in the military; whether homosexuals ought to be able to marry; whether, in short, homosexuals should be recognized as normal in the eyes of the law.

But Sullivan's book cannot be only that. If homosexuals are to be treated as "virtually normal," everyone must be persuaded that they *are* virtually normal. An obvious way to achieve that is for Sullivan to show his readers how very like their adolescent heterosexual passions his own homosexual passions were—save for the painful fact that these were loves he could neither identify nor avow. So there is an unexpected amount of self-revelation in these pages. He tells us of his first kiss with another man ("It was like being in a black-and-white movie that suddenly converted to color") and goes into some detail about his childhood. He gives a touching account of the loneliness and the anxiety that afflicted him as an adolescent with no way of making sense of his homosexual longings; and throughout the book children in that plight particularly arouse his sympathy. Beneath his politics is a simple but passionate belief: to be an unaware homosexual is agony; to be an unpersecuted but closeted homosexual is spiritual death. Sullivan's self-revelations are quite restrained; even so, one senses that they must have cost him some effort. He is, after all, the editor of *The New Republic* and, to the extent that he occupies a coherent political position, a neoconservative. Yet, by his own account, it is conservatives like Hadley Arkes, Charles Krauthammer, and E. L. Pattullo who want to settle for the compromise that he won't touch—"Don't ask, don't tell" as a principle of social life.

AT first glance, "Virtually Normal" seems a wonderfully tidy little book: after a bit of autobiography, Sullivan deals with four unsatisfactory views of the politics of homosexuality—what he labels "prohibitionism," "liberationism," "conservatism," and "liberalism." In his final two chapters, he briskly offers his own prescription for the legal treatment of homosexuality and answers the age-old question "What are homosexuals for?" Whatever else one might say about "Virtually Normal," it leaves the reader no time to get bored or restless. By the same token, it leaves a lot of questions hanging in the air.

Sullivan's discussion of what he calls "prohibitionism" is largely a discussion of religious, and particularly Roman Catholic, objections to homosexuality. Some readers may be startled to see so much attention paid to religion in a book ostensibly about the *politics* of homosexuality—for if the separation of church and state means anything it must mean that religious proscriptions and prescriptions have no standing in the law. Sullivan agrees: "One of the first principles of liberal societies, as they have emerged from the theocracies and dictatorships of the past, is that the religious is not the same as the political." Still, he goes on to point out that in a liberal society people who do not wish to write their faith directly into the criminal law will nonetheless base their ideas about social health and social disorder on their faith, and it is possible and necessary to debate those ideas on their secular merits. One might put the point more bluntly: the voters of Oregon and Colorado are not going to park their religious convictions outside the voting booth, so we must work on their convictions if we want to change their votes.

As it turns out, Sullivan is not much concerned with the beliefs of the Protestant fundamentalists who have been prominent in anti-gay movements. What interests and distresses him is the outlook of the Catholic Church. Sullivan grew up a Catholic, and in an essay he published in *South Atlantic Quarterly* last summer he stressed that his sexuality was "part of my faith-life, not a revolt against it." Over the past two decades, he argues, the Church has boxed itself into a corner. Its 1975 "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics" suggested that not all homosexual desire was wicked—some was, while some reflected an "innate instinct or a pathological constitution judged to be incurable"—but that homosexual *acts* were always wicked. In 1986, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger issued a letter, "The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons," that sharpened the problem. It insisted that "the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin." But it undermined this concession by fiercely reiterating that homosexual activity is "an intrinsic moral evil." As Sullivan wincingly observes, "the document is asking us, it seems, to love the sinner more deeply than ever before, but to hate the sin even more passionately."

The commonest, simplest, and most obvious charge against ho-

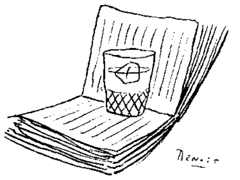
"You can go in now."

mosexual activity is and always has been that it is "unnatural." To the retort that it comes as naturally to homosexuals as heterosexual sex comes to heterosexuals, the Church has always replied by distinguishing between what is natural in the sense of intended by God and what is natural in the sense of merely happening to exist. Sullivan has nothing very deep or subtle to say about appeals to the "naturalness" of heterosexual love and the "unnaturalness" of homosexual love. His response is wholly personal: *he* knows that his homosexuality was unchosen, just as his religious faith was. Both are part of a nature that he discovered in himself and did not make up, and he cannot feel his affections and longings as any sort of crime against nature.

As a polemicist, Sullivan is perhaps excessively reluctant to exploit the weaknesses of the devout. He does point out that Old Testament fulminations against sexual deviance do not pick out homosexual misconduct in particular: masturbation, adultery, and bestiality are all condemned, too. He also observes that if we based our legislation on Leviticus we would have the death penalty for adultery and would make a fuss about eating rabbit and shellfish, as well as about homosexual behavior. Still, religious solemnity gets the better of anthropological irony. What Judaic sexual prescriptions have in common is the wish to encourage procreation; a small tribe in constant danger of extinction took the injunction to "be fruitful and multiply" very seriously. One might think that the crowded state of our own society would be, by the same token, a good argument for one of Sullivan's favorite causes—homosexual marriage, which would combine stability with population control. But that is the sort of lighthearted thought that Sullivan has sworn off.

CHARACTERIZING Sullivan's positive views is not easy; his chapters on conservatism and liberalism hop disconcertingly from topic to topic. It is obvious that he wants to appeal to some conservatives (and not others) and to some liberals (and not others), but the polemical structure of the book demands that "conservatism" and "liberalism" be the names of failed approaches to the politics of homosexuality. In fact, Sullivan's position is one implied by classical, nineteenth-century liberalism: that the legal and political order can accommodate an indefinite variety of noninvasive and nonviolent sexual options, as long as people do not demand too much of one another.

To reach this conclusion, he argues against secular conservatives very much as he earlier argued against religious "prohibitionists." Once uncloseted, homosexuals are not just "virtually normal" but normal. You can infer almost nothing from the fact of their homosexuality: "There's increasingly no reason to infer that because someone says she is a lesbian, she is actually engaging in any sexual practice; just as, if someone tells you that she's a heterosexual, there's no reason to infer anything about the actual state of her love life, her sexual practices, or her predisposition towards this or that private activity." Either may be demurely domestic, celibate, or a far-out fetishist. Conservatives may be right in thinking that our sexual potential is best employed in a traditional marriage; they are plainly wrong in thinking that that provides a reason to use the law to repress alternatives.



Many conservatives suspect that anyone who thinks that government has no business monitoring our sexual tastes must be some sort of liberal. Sullivan half suspects so, too. "It is a curiosity of our culture that while almost everybody these days is some sort of liberal, very few will publicly admit it," he writes. This paradox is contained within "Virtually Normal," as well, and it's hard to see how it could be otherwise. On the one hand, the emotional energy of the book is surely generated by Sullivan's hunger for acceptance by a church that thinks he's a sinner and by conservative intellectuals who think him and his kind a threat to social stability. On the other, the problem of how the state can increase liberty for one person, group, or way of life without unfairly taking it away from another person, group, or way of life is liberalism's chief intellectual challenge.

Sullivan thinks that liberalism can achieve that only when the state allows the traditional freedoms of association and property full scope; the intellectual heart of "Virtually Normal" is a defense of an old-fashioned liberalism against what one might call contemporary anti-discriminatory liberalism. People can associate with whomever they like and avoid whomever they dislike. If you happen not to like Jews, or gays, don't talk to them, don't employ them, and don't rent to them. If you do so by accident, you can fire them or evict them. If you want to see or hire nobody but Jews, or gays, fine. "The freedom that allows the prejudiced to fire a gay worker for no good reason is, according to liberalism, the same liberty that allows a gay company to set itself up and hire exclusively from its own community."

This statement implies a sharp—and debatable—distinction between public and private. Sullivan draws the distinction in the traditional way: the *state* is obliged to treat all citizens alike, but private individuals may do what they choose with their own private property, may express whatever private opinions they like, and may associate with whomever they choose. Since the rise of the modern corporation, a hundred years ago, this has seemed a bit too simple. Being discriminated against by General Motors or J. P. Stevens is not quite like being sacked by one farmer when there are a dozen others to work for. And while few of us would be indignant about a family that declined to rent the spare bedroom to a Jehovah's Witness, we might feel less comfortable if the owner of a mammoth housing development made the same decision.

While many legal statutes at present support such distinctions, Sullivan is unhappy with them. For him, good liberalism respects the line between the public and the private, while bad liberalism does not. Bad liberalism invokes the assistance of government to alter our attitudes. In the current *New Republic* fashion, Sullivan devotes much more energy to attacking the excesses of such liberalism than to attacking simple bigotry or mindless conservatism. It is hard to tell quite what it is that upsets him. He writes, "For many people in Western societies, and most others, the sexual and emotional entanglement of two people of the same gender is a moral enormity. They find such behavior abhorrent, even threatening; and while, in a liberal society, they may be content to leave such people alone, they draw the line at being told they cannot avoid their company in the workplace or in renting housing to them." But he also acknowledges the force of the argument that anti-discrimination legislation diminishes some people's freedom in order to enhance other people's freedom, and may therefore be a good liberal bargain. The obvious question thus raised but never answered is: *When* is it a good bargain?

To provide an answer, Sullivan would have to sort out his arguments against the wrong sort of liberals much more carefully than he does. He complains that "liberals are curiously blind to the illiberal dimensions of their program: they wish, after all, to deny others the right to complete freedom of contract and to complete freedom of expression, in order to protect a specific minority." Why should the fact that a "specific minority" is involved make so much difference? The laws against sex with children protect a specific minority without being any the worse for it. Why should a contract be sacred? Contract murders are usually thought to be particularly nasty. "Complete" freedom of expression has never included the right to utter a libel or incite a mob to violence. Far from being blind to the problems Sullivan brings up, liberals have been worrying at them for two centuries.

IF Sullivan's discussion of liberalism is messy, his account of "liberationism" is simply baffling. It is, in large part, a critique of the ideas and the influence of Michel Foucault. Foucault's difficult and elaborate histories of ideas argued that there is no such thing as sexuality—not in the sense that there was ever a time when human beings did not copulate, masturbate, or whatever, but in the sense that what different societies have thought it worthwhile to describe, approve, or condemn has varied dramatically. The liberationist hope was to free ourselves from the tyranny of description: we might do anything, but we need not *be* anything we did not choose to be.

Whether Foucault has had any political influence—at least, on anyone that Sullivan cares about—turns out to be unclear. "The ad hoc political movements of the 1990s did not spring into action bearing Michel Foucault's latest tome on the history of prisons," he writes. "It is doubtful whether many recent gay activists have ever heard of Foucault, let alone read him." Readers might wonder how in that case it turns out that "the flaws in Foucauldean ideas are nowhere near as profound as the flaws in Foucauldean politics." Sullivan's answer is that "indirectly, 'outing' follows the logic of liberationist politics." But if the people who practiced "outing" did so without ever reading Foucault—and the moral and political objections to "outing" are as obvious to most of us as they are to Sullivan—why drag Foucault into the argument at all?

Besides, Foucault was much more eloquent in describing how we are trapped by the way we think than in suggesting ways out. Talk of liberationism surely suggests other traditions entirely, whether that of writers like Wilhelm Reich, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse, who tried to reconcile Marx and Freud, or liberals like Bertrand Russell, who preached the liberation of the flesh. Of course, one might think that Sullivan, given his austere purposes, could properly have said nothing whatever about sexual liberation—except that his last two chapters end with his own version of liberationism. They begin, however, with policy. First, he insists that the ban on gays in the military is wicked and must go; loyal gays want to serve the republic and shouldn't be stopped from doing so. To keep them out of the military devalues their citizenship. Indeed, one of the book's virtues is that Sullivan sees more than foolishness here; to insult conservative, straitlaced, patriotic gays who want to join the military by prohibiting them from doing so is a breach of the mutual respect that should tie citizens to their governments, and it angers him accordingly.

More unexpectedly, Sullivan insists that homosexual marriage ought to be recognized alongside heterosexual marriage. How he supposes that this can be done without provoking the cultural battles that he complains have been provoked by liberals is deeply mysterious. For Sullivan wants the state to recognize gay marriage, not just nonmarital "domestic partnerships," as the basis of health, housing, and pension benefits. It is true that he insists that churches must not be bullied into extending their sacraments to persons whose behavior they find unacceptable; but what he wants from the state is closer to a sacrament than he supposes. Instituting homosexual marriage is more than giving legal recognition to whatever private contracts for mutual support homosexual couples care to enter into; it legitimatizes their standing as spouses in the eyes of the law. That is just what Sullivan is after, but it is a legitimization that a substantial part of the American people would go to great lengths to deny him. Political practicality aside, it is easy to sympathize with Sullivan's wish that homosexual relationships should enjoy the same institutional anchorages as heterosexual relationships. Not everyone wants stable and monogamous attachments, but those who do find the public and official nature of marriage helpful in sustaining them.

Indeed, here is where the advocates of gay rights can steal the conservatives' clothes. What is more admirable than military service? What is more congenial to the conservative than stable domestic relationships? But no sooner has Sullivan gone down that track than he bolts in the opposite direction. Having argued that there is nothing distinctive about homosexuality, he ends by asking and answering that somewhat mind-boggling question "What are homosexuals for?" Evolutionary biologists have always been puzzled by the question, but Sullivan's interest is essentially cultural, and it comes down to the puzzle of what in the homosexual life takes the place of having and rearing children. One answer is, of course, having and rearing children, but Sullivan rejects it. Although he admits that many gay men and lesbians are biological parents, he nevertheless places them to one side, portentously concluding, "The timeless, necessary, procreative unity of a man and a woman is inherently denied homosexuals."

After belittling the role of homosexuals as parents of their own children, Sullivan offers them the opportunity to serve as parents of the entire society. "They can transfer their absent parental instincts into broader parental roles: they can be extraordinary teachers and mentors, nurses and doctors, priests, rabbis, and nuns; they can throw themselves into charity work, helping the needy and the lonely; they can care for the young who have been abandoned by others, through adoption." Those unharried by children can work later at the office, spend more afternoons coaching soccer, and so usefully on. But Sullivan can't quite stop there: having first argued that homosexuals are virtually normal and at other points that they are just normal, he ends by declaring that they are not entirely normal. They are more ironic, more rebellious, more inclined to press against the boundaries of convention. How Sullivan reconciles his earlier appeals to the conservatives with this final appeasement of the "in your face" brigade, I do not know. Still, it is a suitable conclusion to a book that moves so awkwardly and uneasily between the coolly policy-oriented and the painfully confessional, and in which the author seems never to know whether he is more eager to attack the liberals and the radicals who would carry out the policies he proposes or to mollify the conservatives and the devout who would not.

The jacket of "Virtually Normal" claims that the book will "permanently change the way we think about this issue." It doesn't live up to that ambition. Andrew Sullivan is a clever man; his book jacket calls him "brilliant." But "Virtually Normal" is not brilliant; it is not even clever. Its history, sociology, psychology, and political theory are perfunctory. Its philosophy is thin, and for a man with a first in modern history and modern languages from Oxford and a doctorate in political science from Harvard, Sullivan is oddly naïve about the difficulties that stand in the way of the legal and political treatment of homosexuality which he advocates. "Virtually Normal" is full of loose ends and small incoherences. They serve to make Sullivan's argument more intellectually frustrating but also, ironically, more human and more engaging than a better-organized work would have been. ♦

REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

Love, nostalgia, and the records people play.

BY ROB NIXON

Nick Hornby

KAREN CALDICOTT

CAN a man hope to sustain both a record collection and a relationship? Nick Hornby's first novel, "High Fidelity" (Riverhead; $21.95), turns on this racking question. The man on the rack is Rob Fleming, ex-d.j., college dropout, "Reservoir Dogs" fan, and owner of a failing London record store, who finds himself alone on his thirty-sixth birthday with a "Robocop 2" video and a phone call from his mom. His girlfriend has gone off with the tenant upstairs, and Rob begins to wonder if his low-fidelity relationship isn't a casualty of his devotion to high fidelity. "What came first," he asks, "the music or the misery?"

In the space of two books, Hornby has established himself in England as a maestro of the male confessional. His first, the autobiographical "Fever Pitch," took readers on an uproarious journey through the mental wastelands of the sports bore. You didn't need to follow soccer to love Hornby's exposé of the true fan's life of trivia-sodden mania. "Fever Pitch" achieved cult status, with both the book and a theatrical adaptation becoming national sellouts. On turning to fiction, Hornby has traded obsessions: Rob is dead ignorant about sports but knows a life-threatening amount about records. To save himself from vanishing down the plughole of his own erudition, he transforms his passion into life-buoy lists: "Top Five Records Made by Blind Musicians," "Best Five Pop Songs About Death," "Top Five Bands or Musicians Who Will Have to Be Shot Come the Musical Revolution."

The night after his girlfriend leaves, Rob reorganizes his records—a reflex response to stress. His collection was ordered alphabetically, but he yearns for a more heartfelt filing principle, so he rearranges his thousands of singles and albums into the sequence in which he

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"For goodness' sake, rest in peace!"

bought them. This, he reflects, is a way of writing his autobiography, "without having to do anything like pick up a pen." Hornby has got Rob's chatty mania, his involuted record-driven riffs, down pat: appropriately for a music novel, "High Fidelity" is writing for the ear. Rob may sound wounded, but he is at heart incurably romantic, a sucker for the slushy stuff:

> The other people I like are the ones who are being driven to find a tune that has been troubling them, distracting them, a tune that they can hear in their breath when they run for a bus, or in the rhythm of their windshield wipers when they're driving home from work. . . . Once, a guy came in because he had *dreamed* a record, the whole thing, melody, title and artist. And when I found it for him (it was an old reggae thing, "Happy Go Lucky Girl" by the Paragons), and it was more or less exactly as it had appeared to him in his sleep, the look on his face made me feel as though I was not a man who ran a record shop, but a midwife, or a painter, someone whose life is routinely transcendental.

Many of the book's funniest stretches arise from Rob's exchanges—if that's what they are—with Dick and Barry, his employees at the store, two sub-no-hopers and vinyl solipsists. Barry, the inspiration behind a fierce garage band called Sonic Death Monkey, peers at life through a mist of Top Five lists. He holds to the unbending principle that what you like is the sum of who you are. So if someone can't appreciate the sheer genius of, say, Howlin' Wolf, that person scarcely exists.

Men in Hornby's world are often trying to say things to each other in ways that prevent anything from getting said. There's a marvellous staging of this emotional obliquity soon after Rob and his ex meet for their first, uneasy heart-to-heart since she gave him the boot. Rob is bent on learning how the sex is going with his substitute—her new man, Ian—and he bullies her into a concession: "We haven't done it yet." Rob's hopes are lifted, but he is troubled by the implications of that final word. He needs to talk to someone; only Barry is at hand. Rob tries to parallel-park his way into the semantics of that tormenting "yet": "Barry, if I were to say to you that I haven't seen 'Reservoir Dogs' yet, what would that mean?" Barry, not particularly at home in the hypothetical mode, is at a loss. He is a "Reservoir Dogs" fanatic; only a sick man wouldn't have bothered to see it. Besides, he knows for a fact that Rob has seen it twice. Around and around they go, as Rob's original objective spins out of sight.

Both of Hornby's books reveal a fascination with the sheer voodoo of what so often passes for masculinity: the weird ritual facts, the useless objects, the losing clubs and teams. If "Fever Pitch" is anything to judge by, Hornby is himself a recovering obsessive, a natural for this terrain. As obsessions go, however, records are a special case. Rob is not just a music lover but a vinyl fetishist. Records pick up the past in a way that tapes and CDs can't; they acquire nicks, jumps, scratches, places where the needle carves a groove. There's nothing like that creaky special tune, that riff, or sometimes just a chord change, to take us all the way back. Emotionally and technologically, Hornby suggests, records are a hedge against too much change too fast. Part of us fears getting left behind by life, but another part loves nothing more than the predictable return—whether to the safe misery of old pains or to a past that once seemed full of future. Our records help us hold our history; and sometimes, even Rob admits, they hold too much.

But that discovery arrives belatedly. For most of "High Fidelity," Rob is grooved on nostalgia; his fingers itch for replay the way smokers' itch for cigarettes. It takes an emotional storm at a funeral and a series of madcap encounters with the women who starred in his "Top Five Most Memorable Split-Ups" for him to realize that sometimes the past is pure impediment. Perhaps Rob's transformation comes a little fast. Let's just say that the novel's ending is upbeat and romantic—and cunningly movie-minded. (Disney's Touchstone Pictures may take the bait: it has purchased the film rights to "High Fidelity," with Mike Newell to direct.)

As a creation, Rob is a completely realized individual, but there are lots of guys like him around—underqualified guys, dead-ended in their jobs, attached to women who are smarter, have credentials, and are on the move. In writing about this very contemporary type, Hornby refuses the false choice between male backlash and fiction that is bloodlessly P.C. "High Fidelity" stakes out a territory both more complex and more nearly true to life: Rob is, by turns, warm and brittle, witty and indefensible. It is rare that a book so hilarious is also so sharp about sex and manliness, memory and music. Many men—and, certainly, all addictive personalities—will find in these pages shadows of themselves. And most of us will hear, in Hornby's acoustic prose, the obsessive chords of the past that more often lock up than liberate our hearts. ◆

RECOMMENDED READING

Friends in High Places
by Douglas Frantz and David McKean
(Little, Brown; $24.95)

How this thoughtful biography of Clark Clifford will affect readers depends on their age. Those people who remember the golden boy of the Truman Administration will be shocked to learn how often Clifford hogged rather than shared credit for political triumphs. Younger readers may find the story of an able lawyer and public servant who became *the* Washington influence peddler of his generation just another instance of power corrupting. In walking us through the B.C.C.I. scandal, which stained Clifford's reputation, the authors suggest that Clifford was not a wicked man but one who outlived the America he understood.

Opposite Attraction: The Lives of Erich Maria Remarque and Paulette Goddard
by Julie Gilbert
(Pantheon; $32.50)

Dual biographies can be awkward, and although Remarque and Goddard were celebrities, they did not possess talents of the greatest magnitude. Yet this book is absorbing because the couple illuminate so much about the twentieth century, from the way it created idols (one of Goddard's earlier husbands was Charlie Chaplin) to the way it created refugees (the Nazis drove Remarque from Germany because they deemed "All Quiet on the Western Front" unpatriotic). Neither Goddard nor Remarque was typical of anything, but Gilbert, taking them on their own odd terms, reveals that their appetites, their passions, and their famous friends compose a brief chronicle of our time.

The Secret Six
by Edward J. Renehan, Jr.
(Crown; $25)

The Secret Six were prominent Northern ministers, businessmen, and intellectuals who hated slavery and believed that John Brown could spark a slave uprising in Virginia. These men provided money and arms for Brown, but after the failure of his raid on Harpers Ferry they retreated from responsibility: some lied about their involvement or fled to Canada; one had a nervous breakdown. Renehan is alert to their shortcomings without forgetting that they were foolish in the cause of freedom.

Under the Big Top
by Bruce Feiler
(Scribner; $23)

Like other small boys, the author dreamed of running away to join the circus, and after finishing graduate school he did so. During a season of touring with Beatty-Cole's three rings, he worked as a clown, interrogated colleagues, and learned about the business side of this ancient form of show business. The result is a stunning collective portrait of an ingrown community with its own history, hierarchy, and traditions.

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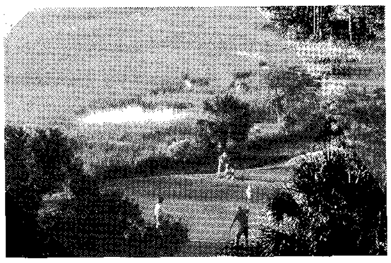

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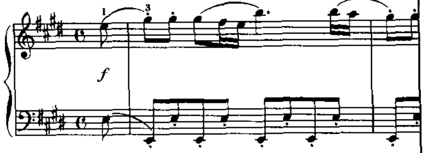

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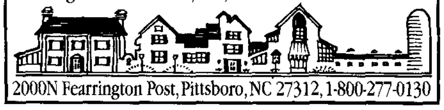

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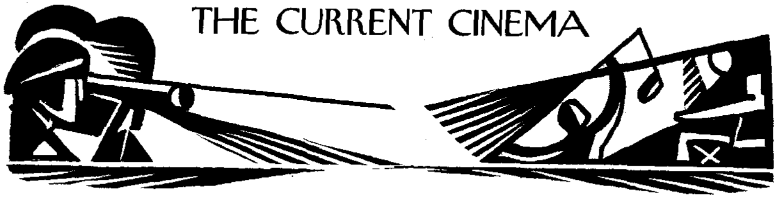


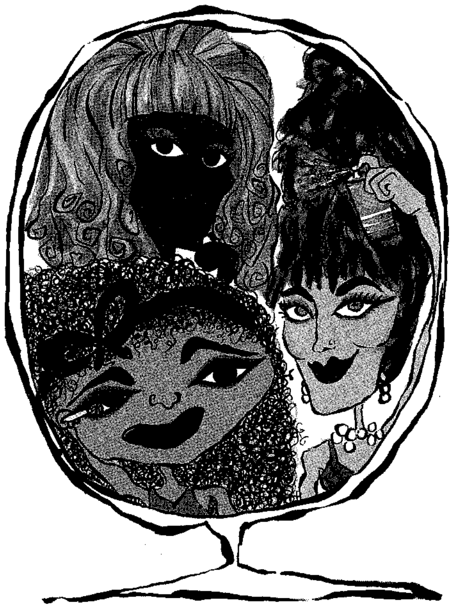
THE CURRENT CINEMA

STYLE WARS

El Mariachi returns, and "To Wong Foo" hits the road.

BY ANTHONY LANE

"DESPERADO" takes a hundred and six minutes to watch. That is probably three times as long as it took to write. Give me twenty minutes and a cup of coffee and even I could have managed to think up the plot of this movie. Stranger arrives in town with guns in his guitar case and vengeance on his mind; shoots and kills a bunch of secondary villains; gets shot himself but not killed; receives succor, if that is the right word, from local beauty; destroys property; wipes out primary villain, who turns out to be *his own brother* (complication!); leaves town, with girl, in black jeep. The writer and director of this quiet, reflective little art-house offering is Robert Rodriguez, who presumably felt so guilty about his anorexic story line that he also took on the job of editing the picture, and of producing it with Bill Borden.



Girls, girls, girls: Wesley Snipes, Patrick Swayze, and John Leguizamo in "To Wong Foo."

Or maybe old habits linger on; maybe Rodriguez can't resist trying to do everything himself, as a means of keeping in touch with his past. "Desperado" is a follow-up to "El Mariachi," the movie that he made a couple of years ago for seven thousand dollars. At Columbia Pictures, where seven thousand dollars might just cover the sushi budget for the weekend, they picked up the film and ran with it. Everyone had fun: Columbia got to show off its newfound ability to pan for gold, and the Rodriguez career began to glitter. The only slightly dull note was struck by "El Mariachi" itself, which seemed overawed by the attention. In retrospect, it's hard to see what the fuss was about: the movie was neat and tense, but it smacked of a thousand dusty shootouts, of every mystery gunslinger and crummy Mexican bar that you've ever seen up on the screen. In a way, "Desperado" is a braver piece of work, quite spectacular in its lack of originality. Rodriguez was handed millions of dollars, proper stars, and Los Lobos on the soundtrack; he had all the leeway he could ask for, and *still* he concentrated on gunslingers and crummy bars. "Desperado" is, in essence, the same as "El Mariachi," only louder.

It also boasts Antonio Banderas in the leading role. For the first few minutes of the movie, however, you aren't altogether sure that it *is* Banderas. He looks more like an intensely determined bison: all you can see is a thick curtain of black hair with a pair of eyes glaring through. The action twitches, then bursts; there is a wild spasm of gunfire, with weapons of ludicrous design and dimensions being brought into play. As the echoes die, and the dying gets under way, we realize that even now we don't have a clear notion of what this Mariachi looks like. We're already familiar with his combat habits—crossed hands for shooting sidewise, a whip of the wrists that suggests he is about to throw rather than fire his pistols—but we know nothing else about him. The film does very little to change this state of affairs.

Even more than most current action movies, "Desperado" is overt and cartoonish in its cynicism about the whole idea of character. The chief baddie, a silken drug dealer named Bucho (Joaquim de Almeida), speaks for everyone, including the director, when he tells his assembled henchmen, "You drive around town. You see someone you don't know. You shoot them. How hard is that?" One can see his point. In the same vein, Rodriguez allows various figures to slip into the narrative, watches them talk or fight for a while, and then, just as they threaten to swell into humanity, wipes them off the face of the plot. Sometimes this is a good thing: the Quentin Tarantino cameo is by now such a non-surprise in any Hollywood film with pretensions to hipness that when his appearance in "Desperado" is cut short by a bullet through the brain you find it hard to mourn. But the small boy who befriends the Mariachi really doesn't deserve to be shot down in the street; and then there's Steve Buscemi. He has the fairly straightforward task of playing a character *called* Buscemi—a comic chorus who likes to beef up the myth of the Mariachi with tall tales. The film needs Buscemi—his pale, ratty looks and gulping delivery provide almost the only counterpoint to its swarthiness and languor—but it blows him away all the same. Like a porno director, Rodriguez uses people as meat; the shocking thing, the thing that gets you rooting for the picture despite yourself, is that he has the panache to turn that indifference into a joke.

It was in the editing room, I suspect, that the joke began to grow. Every shootout is composed with a certain snickering wit—enemies face to face, for example, scrabbling among empty guns for anything with a bullet left in the chamber. But the cutting somehow quickens that confrontation into farce: leaving so little space for reaction shots, it draws the sting from the scene—nobody in "Desperado" has time to fear death before it wallops him into oblivion. All that remains is to admire the style in which the Mariachi goes about his business—spinning one villain around and letting the force of bullets keep him turning like a top, or lying back and propelling another into midair with a jerk of his legs and firing while the poor guy's still in flight. When I saw the movie, people were drinking this stuff in as if it were something fresh and addictive in motion pictures. One didn't want to remind them that back in 1961 Sam Peckinpah was filming the climax of "Ride the High Country," with a hundred and fifty separate camera setups; that he went into the cutting room and stripped some shots to six frames, a quarter of a second; and that, egged on by his editor, he decided that six frames still felt kind of lazy and chopped them down to two. All this in a movie that felt not frantic but ruminative—where short-winded violence was not a laugh but the honorable end to a long life. "Desperado" longs to feed off Peckinpah, but his memory shames it; he makes it look, well, desperate.

The only thing that restores any calm to the proceedings is the presence of Banderas. He's quite happy to rack up his quota of slayings while managing to suggest, with a fraction of a smile, that he finds them perfectly ridiculous. Hollywood would love to promote him as the source of all machismo in the known universe, and he, in turn, is working that impulse into a froth by refusing to play along. Most actors, faced with the mayhem of "Desperado," would have opted for maniacal glee, but when the actor is Banderas you come away with the impression of a sweet temper that is faintly abashed by blood lust. Working with Pedro Almodóvar has schooled him in the art of last-ditch restraint; in the midst of some lavish erotic splurge, he would maintain the air of a man who can't believe either his potency or his luck. Nothing is more tedious than a sex symbol who struts and crows; the true raptors, such as Banderas, seem too amused by sex to leave much room for symbolizing. Even Banderas, though, can't quite rescue this picture; its low-

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grade, high-pressure energy, which scorns the claims of logic and feeling alike, is pretty well impossible to divert; but he may yet make it a hit. From the moment when he reaches back to pluck a gun from the back of his collar, with no more bother than if he were combing his hair, he demonstrates that even the dumbest exercise in style—and that is what "Desperado" amounts to—can be performed with good grace. Robert Rodriguez wants to fry our optic nerves; Antonio Banderas, more generously, cools us down.

BEWARE of baggy titles. "Casablanca" is a good name for a film; "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar" is not. You can feel something strained in the need to flourish such excess kookiness. As a rule, the longer the title, the more firmly it should be understood as shorthand for "Look Out, Here Comes a Complete Stinker." In the case of "To Wong Foo," the strain begins to tell in the opening credits and never goes away. The scene is New York (and vice versa, I suppose), where two drag queens, Noxeema (Wesley Snipes) and Vida (Patrick Swayze), attend a glamour contest and share first prize—a trip to California and back. For good measure, and from the boringly unflawed goodness of their hearts, they take along one of the failed contestants, "a little Latin boy" called Chi Chi (John Leguizamo). So, dressed to the nines, with occasional tens and elevens for those special occasions, the three set off in a long cream Cadillac to pitch their camp across America. It all looks suspiciously like a rip-off of last year's "The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert," which took a similar trio across Australia. (What is it with drag queens? Why do they always travel in threes, like musketeers?) But "To Wong Foo" is a road movie that runs out of road. The girls get lost in the Midwest, wind up in sleepy Snydersville, and spend the rest of the movie improving the town's image—putting little old ladies into sixties fashions, for instance, a transformation that struck me as far more degrading than revivifying.

"To Wong Foo" marks the movies' first mainstream dip into the culture of cross-dressing, and the only remotely shocking thing about the whole enterprise is its belief that anyone is still going to be shocked by the sight of drag queens. Although Hollywood likes to picture itself as being in the vanguard of public taste, it can more often be found stumbling along in the rear. To watch Patrick Swayze and Wesley Snipes putting on stockings and puce lipstick may be a new sensation, but the novelty has worn off by the end of the opening credits; what is then required is a movie, but instead we get a slender skit, stretched out to such inadvisable length that you can hear the elastic snap, and overplayed by all concerned except the dignified Swayze. One of the creepy, disingenuous aspects of "To Wong Foo" is that it uses drag as a convenient way of not thinking about sex. From time to time, Noxeema and Vida drop the word "gay" into the conversation, but that is the sole sign of anything stirring in the hormone department. The costumes are as flaming as you'd expect, but they give you no clue to the true desires of anyone who wears them. They're just a coverup.

The person in charge of this leaking balloon is Beeban Kidron, the director, but you'd never suspect it. Kidron recently made a documentary about New York hookers and their tricks; it was suitably unflinching—packed with interesting tips about what to do with a cheese grater when you don't have any cheese, stuff like that. How somebody with Kidron's tough stance could have come up with a film as demure and shrinking as "To Wong Foo" is a mystery, although it helps if you notice that the movie was made by Amblin Entertainment. As the three beauties hit Snydersville, you realize what you are watching: a story about unearthly beings who descend on small-town America and slowly unveil the qualities that it never knew it possessed. In short, it's a school-of-Spielberg fable posing as an outrage. Men dressed as women, according to this movie, aren't really men at all: they are aliens, and they come to bring peace on earth. What a drag. ♦

In an editorial yesterday, the Chronicle misidentified Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina as a Democrat. He is a Republican. The Chronicle regrets the error.
—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

This is how vicious rumors get started.

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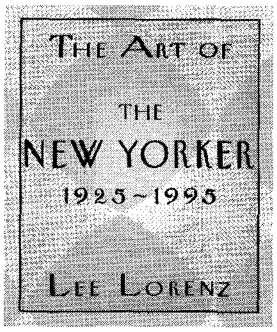

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THE THEATRE

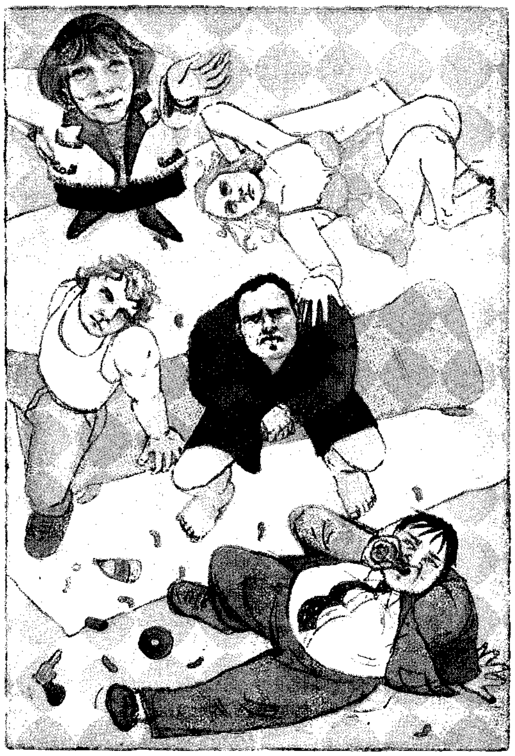
FIVE DEGREES OF SEPARATION

In his new play, Nicky Silver shares his recipes for unhappiness.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

MAYBE it's a good thing that life is unfair: otherwise, we'd have no Nicky Silver plays. Silver, who first made a name for himself in 1993, with "Pterodactyls," writes what are commonly called dark comedies, but that's not exactly what makes him distinctive. What sets him apart is that he doesn't seem to have the not so hidden agenda common to the funny and the clever, which is the deep desire to ingratiate. Silver recently told an interviewer that he believes "there's a very finite amount of happiness in this world to be had," and in his work he delineates the brutal—and brutally funny—politics of such scarcity without apology or any expectation of being loved for his troubles. Beneath the rage that fuels his plays is a whole lot more rage. It's not merely that the glass is half empty—the drink isn't what he ordered, the waiter spilled it on him, there's a bug in it, and he's seated at the worst table in the place.

Silver's last play, "Raised in Captivity," which was presented at the Vineyard Theatre earlier this year, was full of hairpin turns in mood and tone, and of unsettling resonances between the past and the present, the living and the dead. In one of its many memorable moments, the main character's mother, who has been killed by a flying showerhead, says to him, "I may be dead, but I'm still your mother." You didn't know if you were supposed to laugh or cry; you wanted to do both. In Silver's new play, "The Food Chain," at the Westside Theatre under the direction of Robert Falls, the comedy is broader and more neatly packaged, as if it were a program on the Dark Comedy Channel; this time, you're supposed to laugh. The first of the evening's three scenes offers a familiar, sitcom-ish setup: Amanda (Hope Davis), a wispy, Waspy New York poet who lives in a tastefully hip Chelsea apartment, calls a crisis hot line in the middle of the night because her husband has been AWOL for two weeks—which is two-thirds of their marriage and half of their acquaintance. The phone is answered by Bea, sitting in a cozy, cluttered office across the stage from the pacing Amanda. Bea, a Jewish matron whose idea of helping is to criticize and whose idea of listening is to talk, is brought vividly to life by Phyllis Newman. Her performance is subtly detailed and hilarious. "You don't know what loneliness is until you've walked a mile in my shoes," she tells Amanda. "You haven't tasted loneliness, you haven't been in the same state with it." Amanda, meanwhile, merely wants to maintain her fantasy of true love while venting her anger about her disappointment in it. Every Silver play has a cloudy lining, which often produces a downpour, and Amanda, during her conversation with Bea, lets loose several times with tirades whose fury and high truth content make her recoil from herself. She rants about being alone, about the tyranny of beauty, about having to carry a handbag while men get to have pockets and the use of both hands. Amanda seems to grow in size during these passages and then, catching herself before she goes too far beyond feminine seemliness, to deflate back into dithering, hysterical passivity.



Clockwise, from top left: Phyllis Newman, Hope Davis, Rudolf Martin, Tom McGowan, and Patrick Fabian.

LARA TOMLIN

The second scene, which takes place the same night, also features a twosome in loony lockstep: Serge (Patrick Fabian), a very attractive (by his own admission) runway model with perfectly tousled blond hair, and Otto (Tom McGowan), an obese and self-deluded former lover of Serge's, who shows up at Serge's apartment and tries to force his way back into Serge's affections. Arriving with a bagful of junk food, Otto begins pigging out, messing up the bed, going through Serge's closet, taking phone calls from his mother (and one from his analyst, who is, of course, even more screwed up than he is), and cajoling and hectoring the helpless Serge. Literally and figuratively, Otto takes up a lot of space—McGowan has been padded almost to the point of sphericity—and he stockpiles the endlessly renewable resource of self-hatred with every mouthful and with every rejection. It's a pathetically accurate illustration of the sick joke that rules the world of the unlovable—that those who are in the most desperate need of love are absolutely guaranteed not to get it.

In the final scene, the five characters that make up what Bea calls "this unfortunate pentagon" (Amanda's husband, played by Rudolf Martin, eventually comes home) turn out to be connected in predictably farcical ways, and by the end of the play their fates are sealed, if not to everyone's satisfaction: sure enough, there isn't quite enough happiness to go around. Silver's world view is either dead-on or a dead end, depending on where you happen to be sitting. He has called his plays "little pageants of woe," and they are certainly that; it's hard to say what direction his cavalcades of complaint are heading in, but I have to admit that I love a parade, even if it's going nowhere fast. ♦

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MUSICAL EVENTS

BLANK CANVAS

David Lang's "Modern Painters" débuts at the Santa Fe Opera.

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

SINCE there aren't many operas based on the lives of art critics, David Lang's decision to make John Ruskin the central figure of his piece for Santa Fe this summer at least promised something of an interesting departure. A life in which the most dramatic incident is a moment of vision, the boldest gesture the lifting of a pen, could have offered constructive challenges to music's capacity for conveying enlightenment and magnifying the small. Not only that but Mr. Lang's particular choice of hero opened numerous other avenues, for Ruskin's life and works sprawled across the nineteenth century and touched many of the themes that have given us a troublesome inheritance: certainty about the positive moral force of art, and hence about the possibility of human progress; respect for the craftsman and the artisan, and hence for work above capital; intense curiosity about the past, as a source of models by which to guide the future; questions of the extent to which great public accomplishments are compromised by petty private faults.

The composer David Lang: presenting the tragedy of the orderly mind.

MAX MILLER

Alas, no more than a dribble of this man's chaotic, passionate, concerned personality made its way into Mr. Lang's "Modern Painters," and though to decry the piece simply for infidelity to the facts might be excessively Ruskinesque, there seems little point in selecting a huge, outlandish subject in order to create a routine melodrama on one of the most routine topics of sentimental caricature: the intellectual's inability to cope with life. "The tragedy of Ruskin," Mr. Lang tells us, "was that his brilliant and orderly mind did not prepare him for the disorderliness of a real life." Not so. Ruskin's mind may have been brilliant, but few people have accused him of orderliness. His books ramble, the grand plan—or even the ostensible subject matter—forever at the mercy of momentary perceptions and insights, or of contradictions and swerves occasioned by the sheer energy of writing. He could be dogmatic; indeed, he nearly always was dogmatic, but on the basis of instinct, not theory. His was a mind in riot long before the confusion that overtook him around the age of sixty.

As for his being ill-equipped "for the disorderliness of a real life" (as opposed to an unreal life?), well, it would have been nice if some tiny bit of disruptive vivacity had crept into the morgue of the score, for this was the big problem: not that the work failed to capture even a fleck of Ruskin but that it lumped along avoiding anything more human—or more interesting—

than the business of counting from one to twelve or so and making repetitive patterns. This was opera in the condition of the Victorian stitched sampler, though lacking the charms of naïveté and honest skill. Let's assume for the moment that there might be some mileage in Mr. Lang's idea of an orderly mind offended by unorganized reality. An opera on this subject would have to show us both things—the system and the mess—and would have to show us, too, some relation, some tension, between them. But "Modern Painters" failed to do that, and failed the more soundly because it was revealing, in certain aspects, a glimmer of recognition of what it ought to have been about.

Manuela Hoelterhoff's libretto was cast in seven scenes, supposedly corresponding to the criteria of value Ruskin elaborated in his book "The Seven Lamps of Architecture": Sacrifice, Truth, Power, and so on. This could have been a powerful dramatic notion. One can imagine an opera in which the central character's interpretation of events is shackled by a fixed idea, and by a different fixed idea in each scene. Observing other people in action, the protagonist would see them as making a display of sacrifice, or whatever, when it would be plain to us and to them that this wasn't so. "Modern Painters," however, didn't take that line. The seven great abstractions weren't cages but, rather, interchangeable blank screens, on which almost any events could be haphazardly projected. Under the heading of "Life," for example, we observed first the funeral of Turner, in whose defense Ruskin had begun the multivolume work whose title Mr. Lang has briefly made his own, then the libel case that Whistler brought against Ruskin, and then the beginnning of Ruskin's infatuation with Rose La Touche, all in simple succession, without any musical or dramatic energy to push from one into the next, without any reason for these events to be representing this category rather than another (Memory or Beauty, to name but two, would be just as appropriate, since all grand ideas, when unfulfilled, are interchangeable), and without any sense that the category cramps the portrayal or the interpretation of what occurs.

But then how could cramp or constraint be observable in music as rigid as Mr. Lang's? This was the irony of "Modern Painters"—that criticism of an excessive enthusiasm for order was supposed to be coming from within a work that could hardly be more fixed or more elementary. If Mr. Lang wanted to show us "the disorderliness of a real life," even as a possibility, he needed more than the vamps, regular pulses, arpeggios, and other circulations of hand-me-down minimalism. In the crucial duet between Ruskin and Effie Gray—placed, it would seem, on their wedding night—the same schematic assembly of the same four-note chord, note by note to the same sixteenth-note pulse, was repeated over and over again. If these numbing iterations had been heard against the imminent possibility of music more inchoate, the result might have been an effective image of the difficulties Ruskin evidently encountered in relationships that required him to do something other than savor an object, with all his intellectual and emotional powers, and then divulge his reactions in writing. But Mr. Lang's repeated measures evoked no lurking monsters. This was all there was. A woefully limited capacity for feeling was as clear in this Effie as in this Ruskin, and both were casualties not of their own inadequacies but of the music's.

Repetitions on a larger scale were similarly debilitating. In the funeral-trial-obsession scene, two solos by Ruskin—one lamenting the lapse of his response to nature, the other drawing him toward Rose—were sung to identical orchestral accompaniments. And because the music was faceless its reprise failed to suggest anything beyond vacancy, admixed with a certain measure of surprise and worry that the musicians might simultaneously have turned back through their parts in error. Mechanisms of rotation and repeat, which Philip Glass and Steve Reich have used to underscore new forms of drama, have less to offer a conventional little narrative that proceeds according to a dully normal sort of temporal flow. Musical stripes and restatements can change how we hear time; they can also seem merely the easiest possible way of occupying it.

Mr. Lang's vocal writing was no less flat. The bulk of "Modern Painters" was delivered in short phrases, often uncomfortable to sing (it was a small miracle to make François Le Roux, as Ruskin, sound ordinary) and hardly ever expressive of emotion or character. Ruskin's mother, eulogizing stewed trout, sounded no different from Mrs. La Touche in her complaint about Ruskin's attentions to her daughter. Everything passed without life or interest. Under such circumstances, qualities of performance faded into a mild wonder that the piece found people willing to perform it at all. Francesca Zambello and Alison Chitty, the director and the designer, did their best with a budget that looked to have been no larger than the piece deserved. That "Modern Painters" was the work of a real composer was proved only by its first minute, which adapted and degraded one of Mr. Lang's most successful pieces: "Anvil Chorus," for solo percussionist. After that, there was nothing, for two hours.

The Santa Fe Opera will surely not lose heart. Its support for new work is too encouraging and necessary, and by now too deeply ingrained: premières of pieces by Tobias Picker and Peter Lieberson are scheduled for 1996 and 1997. "Modern Painters," though, seemed to have lowered a pall over most of the season. The one exception was a new production of "Salome." John Crosby's affection for Strauss was richly displayed in his conducting of the score, and Inga Nielsen was vivid, young, bright, and immaculate in the title role. Given a set open to the desert sky, Santa Fe can still provide an operatic experience like no other. ♦

After reading one of her poems at a school board meeting, authorities said, Mrs. Ricci punched, kicked and pushed a Mount Vernon police officer, Michael Pelliccio. Court records show that Officer Pelliccio required treatment at the local hospital. Mrs. Ricci pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of harassment.
— *The Times.*

Another one of those PTA poetry slams.

SHOUTS & MURMURS

CALLING ON COLIN

BY JAMIE MALANOWSKI

I'm not saying the Board [of Education] has to select a business person [as the next Schools Chancellor], or has to select a person who's run another government agency. [But] let's say Colin Powell.—*Mayor Giuliani, quoted in the Times, July 30, 1995.*

It's almost, "Powell, irrespective of his views." . . . There's a yearning for a sense of moral conviction.—*Paul Tsongas, quoted in the same article.*

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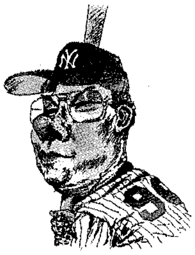
The *Post*, September 18, 1995

POW-POW-POW-POWELL!



O.K., folks, make your World Series reservations now. Hard on the heels of the acquisitions of David Cone and Ruben Sierra, the Yankees yesterday signed former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell to a one-year pact.

"I'm not sure where we'll put him," a grinning George Steinbrenner bubbled at a news conference. "I'm not sure whether he's a righty or a lefty—frankly, I'm not even sure if he's a pitcher or a hitter. But I do know this: our team has been yearning for a sense of moral conviction, and my morality people tell me that nobody has more of that than Colin Powell."

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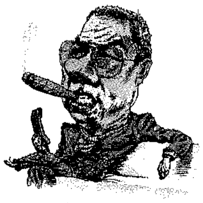
Variety, November 6, 1995

MCA SHOCKER: IT'S POWELL



EDGAR BRONFMAN, JR., the president of the Seagram Company, today stunned Hollywood and Wall Street by announcing that he had named the light-hitting New York Yankee infielder Colin Powell to run MCA, the sprawling entertainment conglomerate. The post, which had been offered to Hollywood insider Michael Ovitz, goes instead to someone who has no experience in entertainment or movie production.

"Frankly, I'm not so sure that's a problem," said Mr. Bronfman. "I know he likes John Wayne and musicals, and I know he ran Desert Storm, which got tremendous ratings. Mostly, he has a lot of moral conviction, which is something Hollywood has been yearning for."

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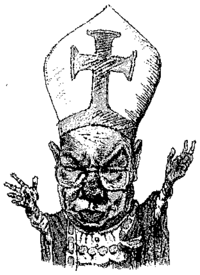
The *Times*, December 4, 1995

IN ADVENT MESSAGE, CARDINAL STRESSES MORAL CONVICTION



IN a wide-ranging interview held yesterday, John Cardinal O'Connor defended the Church's teachings on celibacy and suggested that the next Pope could be the Hollywood entertainment executive Colin Powell.

"Surely I have only good wishes for our present Pontiff," said the Cardinal, "but we should be prepared for any eventuality. I know Popes are traditionally selected from among the College of Cardinals, but I sense a certain restlessness among the electors, and I think we would keep an open mind if someone like Mr. Powell was interested.

"I'm not sure if Mr. Powell is a Catholic, or if he even believes in God," the Cardinal admitted, "but I do know that Catholics constantly yearn for moral conviction, and Mr. Powell's got a lock on that."

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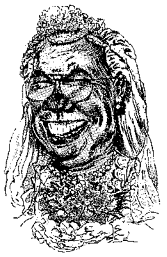
Liz Smith's column, January 12, 1996

FLASH: JOHN-JOHN TO WED!



THE other night during the party at Planet Hollywood for the première of "Glory Days," the seventy-eight-million-dollar musical based on the John Wayne epic "The Alamo" that MCA's Universal studios crashed into production last November, I ran into the world's most eligible bachelor, John F. Kennedy, Jr., who absolutely floored me with the news that he was planning to take a bride. His intended: none other than the newly invested Pope Colin I. I told the gorgeous Kennedy that it's my understanding that Popes don't traditionally marry, and, besides, the Pope is already married, and, on top of that, is a man—at least he was when he starred in the World Series last fall. John-John seemed nonplussed. "I hear different," he said. "But, frankly, I'm not sure if any of that should matter. All I know is that I'm ready to settle down and get some moral conviction."

•

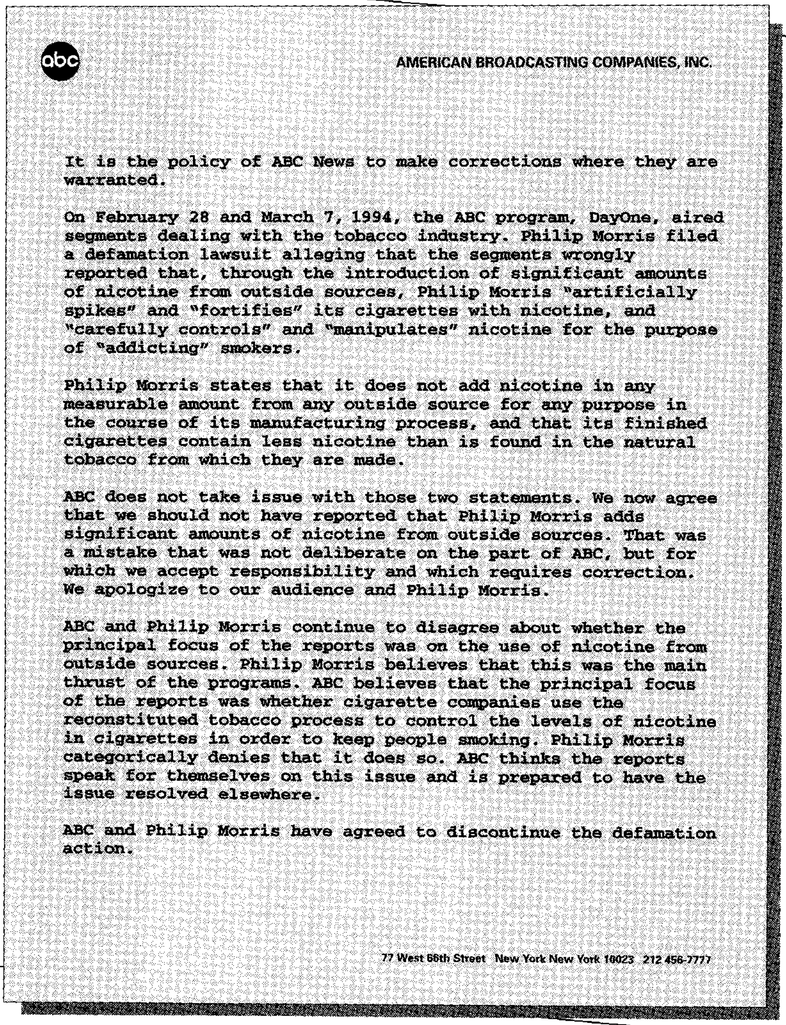
The Washington *Post*, February 2, 1996

CLINTON BEEFS UP WHITE HOUSE STAFF

FACED with apparently never-ending investigations into his Administration's handling of Whitewater, Waco, and Bosnia, President Bill Clinton today appointed Mrs. John F. Kennedy, Jr., to be his Special Counsel for Moral Conviction. "Obviously, people believe Mrs. Kennedy can do anything," said Mr. Clinton. "Let's see if he can change the past." ♦

Apology accepted.

The ABC television network has issued the following correction and apology to Philip Morris concerning last year's DayOne broadcasts, which alleged that tobacco companies are "spiking" their cigarettes with significant amounts of nicotine from outside sources:



AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANIES, INC.

It is the policy of ABC News to make corrections where they are warranted.

On February 28 and March 7, 1994, the ABC program, DayOne, aired segments dealing with the tobacco industry. Philip Morris filed a defamation lawsuit alleging that the segments wrongly reported that, through the introduction of significant amounts of nicotine from outside sources, Philip Morris "artificially spikes" and "fortifies" its cigarettes with nicotine, and "carefully controls" and "manipulates" nicotine for the purpose of "addicting" smokers.

Philip Morris states that it does not add nicotine in any measurable amount from any outside source for any purpose in the course of its manufacturing process, and that its finished cigarettes contain less nicotine than is found in the natural tobacco from which they are made.

ABC does not take issue with those two statements. We now agree that we should not have reported that Philip Morris adds significant amounts of nicotine from outside sources. That was a mistake that was not deliberate on the part of ABC, but for which we accept responsibility and which requires correction. We apologize to our audience and Philip Morris.

ABC and Philip Morris continue to disagree about whether the principal focus of the reports was on the use of nicotine from outside sources. Philip Morris believes that this was the main thrust of the programs. ABC believes that the principal focus of the reports was whether cigarette companies use the reconstituted tobacco process to control the levels of nicotine in cigarettes in order to keep people smoking. Philip Morris categorically denies that it does so. ABC thinks the reports speak for themselves on this issue and is prepared to have the issue resolved elsewhere.

ABC and Philip Morris have agreed to discontinue the defamation action.

77 West 66th Street New York New York 10023 212 456-7777

Philip Morris accepts ABC's apology, which was read recently on the ABC television network.

As for the group of people who eagerly embraced the "spiking" allegation to serve their ongoing crusade against the tobacco industry—we stand ready to accept their apologies as well.

The tobacco industry is subject to relentless attacks. And our responses to accusations like "spiking" are often disregarded by the media and our critics. Here's all we ask: When charges are leveled against us, don't take them at face value. Instead, consider the information we provide, and then—just as importantly—subject the charges themselves to the scrutiny and skepticism they deserve. Fairness and a sincere interest in the truth demand no less.

PHILIP MORRIS

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